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EDITORS

Mrs. Palmer Cook Mrs. J. Allen Davis Mrs. Laura O. Vruwink

Mrs. Chester A. Ommanney, *Preview Chairman*

Mrs. E. P. Fleming, *Business Manager*

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FEATURE FILMS

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES ◇

Maria Montez, Jon Hall, Turhan Bey, Andy Devine, Kurt Katch, Frank Puglia, Fortunio Bonanova, Moroni Olsen, Ramsey Ames, Noel Cravat, Chris-Pin Martin, Scotty Beckett, Yvette Duguay. Written for the screen by Edmund L. Hartmann. Direction by Arthur Lubin. Universal.

In revamping this famous Arabian Nights' tale, some liberties have been taken with the original fantasy, but it is given an unsophisticated treatment which should delight family groups. It is unusually successful in the use of color, and the vast, spectacular sets, the beautiful costumes of oriental splendor, and the exciting action make it highly entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Good, except for very young

❖

THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY ◇ ◇

Lynn Bari, Francis Lederer, Akim Tamiroff, Nazimova, Louis Calhern, Blanche Yurka, Donald Woods, Barton Hepburn, Joan Lorring, Emma Dunn. Adapted by Howard Estabrook and Herman Weissman from Thornton Wilder's novel. Photography by John W. Boyle, A.S.C. Music by Dmitri Tiomkin. Produced and directed by Rowland V. Lee. Bogeaus. United Artists.

Those familiar with Thornton Wilder's fascinating story of seventeenth century Peru will wonder why it has been altered and distorted by the screen writers until it loses its metaphysical quality and most of its power. Even some of the five destined to die escape destruction in the rocky chasm below the bridge. Akim Tamiroff as *Uncle Pio* gives the sole vivid performance; of the remainder of the cast, Francis Lederer and Louis Calhern are most capable The film is embellished by a picturesque Peruvian setting and elaborate costumes, but these fail to give distinction to a curiously negative production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature and little interest

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

❖

BROADWAY RHYTHM ◇ ◇

George Murphy, Ginny Simms, Charles Winninger, Nancy Walker, Gloria De Haven, Ben Blue, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Lena Horne, Hazel Scott, The Ross Sisters, Kenny Bowers, Dean Murphy, Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Screen play by Dorothy Kingsley and Harry Clork, based on musical by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein 2nd. Direction by Roy Del Ruth. M-G-M.

This glittering array of talent will more than satisfy those in search of light diversion. The slight story ties together excellent specialty acts of diversified character, and it is a riot of color and tuneful entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good of type

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

❖

CALLING DR. DEATH ◇ ◇

Lon Chaney, Ramsay Ames, Patricia Morison, J. Carrol Naish, George Dolenz, Fay Helm. Screen play by Edward Dean. Direction by Reginald Le Borg. Universal.

Reported to be the beginning of the new "Inner Sanctum" mystery series scheduled by Universal, this is a somewhat morbid film dealing with pseudo-scientific theories and hypnosis. *Dr. Mark Steele,* a brain specialist, is the central character and is played by Lon Chaney. The doctor's wife is murdered and a man is adjudged guilty, but in the nick of time and by scientific methods another person is discovered to have been the perpetrator of the crime.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK ◇ ◇

Donald O'Connor, Peggy Ryan, Ann Blyth, Helen Broderick, Helen Vinson, Minna Gombel, Arthur Treacher, Patric Knowles. Original story by Robert Arthur. Direction by Charles Lamont. Musical direction by Chas. Previn. Universal.

Efforts of the relatives of a charming young girl to disrupt her romance with a youth who is too much like his dashing father form the nucleus of this light, tuneful, amusing picture. Universal has allotted Donald O'Connor excellent support and a comedy which is set in no ordinary mould. Ann Blyth is a charming and talented new actress, and the older members of the cast are as pleasing as the juniors. The specialty acts, songs and dances are smoothly interpolated, while no brash jitterbugs cheapen the production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes, if interested

❖

THE DESERT SONG ◇ ◇

Dennis Morgan, Irene Manning, Bruce Cabot, Lynne Overman, Gene Lockhart, Faye Emerson, Victor Francen, Curt Bois, Jack La Rue, Marcel Dalio.

With new embellishments of the plot and less emphasis on the music, this modern version of an old favorite is still good entertainment. The setting is French Morocco in 1939. Nazi agents are urging a French company to build a railroad which will give them access to Dakar, and enslaved Riffs are to be used as laborers. An American soldier of fortune, aided by a French songstress, champions the cause of the Riffs and exposes the Nazi plot. Technicolor plays up desert scenery and the color of a crowded Moroccan city. Dennis Morgan and Irene Manning sing pleasingly and the cast is good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

DESTINATION TOKYO ◇ ◇

Cary Grant, John Garfield, Alan Hale, John Ridgley, Dane Clark, Warner Anderson, William Prince, Robert Hutton, Peter Whitney, Tom Tully, Faye Emerson, Warren Douglas, John Forsythe, John Alvin, Bill Kennedy. Screen play by Delmer Daves and Albert Maltz from story by Steve Fisher. Photography by Bert Glennon, A.S.C. Music by Franz Maxman. Direction by Delmer Daves. Warner Bros.

"Destination Tokio" is a stunning adventure film, packed with episodes any one of which would have been sufficient for an exciting film. It is the account of a submarine mission sent to establish a temporary weather station on Japanese soil in order to broadcast conditions to the carrier "Hornet" prior to Doolittle's raid on Tokyo. The film gives a picture of submarine service reaching the peak of dangerous living and sublime heroism. It describes the conditions of the voyage, the informal but unrelaxed discipline, the harmony between members of the crew, the constant expectancy of danger. With excellent photography, remarkable sound effects, and a good cast, this is worth while entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Emotionally disturbing

❖

GUNG HO! ◇ ◇

Randolph Scott, Alan Curtis, Noah Beery, Jr., J. Carroll Naish, Sam Levene, David Bruce. Screen play by Lucien Hubbard based on the factual story by Lt. W. S. Le Francois, U.S.M.C. Direction by Ray Enright. Produced by Walter Wanger. Universal.

Although necessarily "Gung Ho!" could not be made on the scene of action, it has much of the feeling of a documentary film. "Gung," meaning work, and "Ho," meaning harmony, in Chinese form a slogan adopted by Lt. Col. Evans F. Carlson to express the spirit he developed in the 210 picked Marines he led on the Makin raid of August 17, 1942, which was so successful that only two of the 350 defending Japanese were left alive. This is the step by step, phase by phase history of the Makin raid: the training of the men to make them powerful, relentless killers, the seven-day approach by submarine and the forty-hour inferno of battle across the sand stretches and marshes of the palm-studded island. It is savage, primitive warfare on both sides with the advantage going to the Americans because of their superb strength and training and their ability to think as individuals.

The authenticity of the film is due largely to the fact that the author of the account on which the screen play is based, Lt. W. S. Le Francois, and seven of the Marines in the cast were actually on the Makin raid. The

film is powerful, and some of it so terrible that anyone who has not a strong grip on his emotions should not see it, but it ranks high as a picture of the war.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very strong. Depends on individual

Children, 8 to 12 No. Much too realistic

❖

THE FIGHTING SEABEES ◇ ◇

John Wayne, Susan Hayward, Dennis O'Keefe, William Frawley, Leonid Kinskey, J. M. Kerrigan, Grant Withers, Paul Fix, Ben Welden, William Forrest, Addison Richards, Jay Norris, Duncan Renaldo. Screen play by Borden Chase and Aeneas MacKenzie. Direction by Edward Ludwig. Republic Pictures.

In addition to entertainment value, this film offers a constructive history of the Navy "C. B's" (Construction Battalions), explaining their vital importance to the military effort, the réason for the requirement of combat training, and the necessity for central command. The action is exciting and dramatic, and while the romance is perhaps an unnecessary diversion, it adds to popular interest and serves to highlight the characters of two fine men.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Exciting

❖

A GUY NAMED JOE ◇ ◇

Spencer Tracy, Irene Dunne, Van Johnson, Ward Bond, James Gleason, Lionel Barrymore, Esther Williams, Barry Nelson. Screen play by Dalton Trumbo, adapted by Frederick Hazlitt Brennen from an original story by Chandler Sprague and David Boehm. Musical score by Herbert Stothart. Direction by Victor Fleming. M-G-M.

It may be a mistake to attempt to preach a lesson in a picture dealing with the supernatural. At any rate the best part of this film is that which deals with the living, and Spencer Tracy as *Pete* is most successful when he is the brilliant, reckless flyer, beloved by and loving beyond reason the lovely *D'rinda* of the Ferry Command. Killed in glorious combat, he returns as a spirit to act as mentor to a young flyer, guiding him through perils of training and of warfare in the South Pacific. The plot is lightened by humor which is shrewd and earthy. Most of the picture is very well presented by an excellent cast, the backgrounds are realistic with fine composition, and music is skilfully introduced, with the Army Air Corps song as a recurring theme. The scenes of aerial combat are some of the finest and most spectacular ever filmed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 Confusing

THE HEAVENLY BODY ◇ ◇

Wm. Powell, Hedy Lamarr, James Craig, Fay Bainter, Henry O'Neill, Spring Byington, Robert Sully, Morris Ankrum, Franco Corsaro, Connie Gilchrist. Screen play by Michael Arlen and Walter Reisch. Based on a story by Jacques Thery. Direction by Alexander Hall. Production by Arthur Hornblow, Jr. M-G-M.

Anyone looking for frothy nonsense will find it neatly dished up in this film. *Professor Whitley* is so intent upon computing the exact moment when his newly discovered comet will collide with the moon that his wife, *Vickey*, tired of his all-night absences, takes up astrology, which she confuses with astronomy, and becomes equally absorbed in finding out when she will meet her true love. By the time the professor has lost interest in heavenly bodies and begun to pay attention to more earthly matters, a lot of funny things have happened. William Powell as the professor and Fay Bainter as a fortune-teller are at their best, but Hedy Lamarr seems less adept in light comedy. The settings are unusually interesting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unobjectionable

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

❖

HENRY ALDRICH, BOY SCOUT ◇ ◇

Jimmy Lydon, Charles Smith, John Litel, Olive Blakeney, Joan Mortimer, Minor Watson, Darryl Hickman, David Holt, Richard Haydel, Ralph Hoopes. Original screen play by Agnes Christine Johnston. Direction by Hugh Bennett. Paramount.

Except for the ending, which is unnecessarily exaggerated, this film keeps closer to the adventures of a real boy than most of the series. Henry is a Boy Scout, and in spite of his aptitude for getting into trouble, he becomes a "good example" and helps regenerate a spoiled brat placed in his care. The story emphasizes the Scout creed of honor and duty, and it has enough details of interest and humor to make it agreeable entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Exciting ending

❖

THE IMPOSTOR ◇ ◇

Jean Gabin, Richard Whorf, Allyn Joslyn, Ellen Drew, Peter Van Eyck, Ralph Morgan, Eddie Quillen, John Qualen, Milburn Stone. Original screen play by Julien Duvivier, dialogue adapted from the French by Stephen Longstreet. Photographed by Paul Ivano. Produced and directed by Julien Duvivier. Universal.

Saved from the guillotine when the advancing Nazis bomb a prison in Tour, *La Farge* (Jean Gabin) escapes to join the Free French in North Africa. The gradual awakening of a man's soul to the nobility of friendship and love of country is revealed in a convincing story of regeneration. The film is somewhat somber in tone, but it lacks any suggestion of sentimentality, is

beautifully acted and directed, and is well worth seeing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Depressing and mature

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

IN OUR TIME ◇ ◇

Ida Lupino, Paul Henried, Nancy Coleman, Mary Boland, Victor Francen, Nazimova, Michael Chekhov. Original screen play by Ellis St. John and Howard Koch. Music by Franz Waxman. Photography by Carl Guthrie, A.S.C. Direction by Vincent Sherman. Warner Brothers.

The title uses Chamberlain's flimsy promise that there should be no war, "in our time." An English girl traveling in Poland meets and marries a young Polish aristocrat, and after attempting an experiment to run his estate on well-planned social lines, they are caught in the German invasion. In showing the fall of Poland and the kind of thinking which made it possible, the picture brings out clearly the change of viewpoint that is taking place with tremendous implications for the future. The love story is moving. Paul Henreid brings a sharpness and fire to the role of Stephen, and Ida Lupino shows strength of character blended with a disarming naivete. The supporting cast is excellent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good but mature

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

❖

IT HAPPENED TOMORROW ◇ ◇

Dick Powell, Linda Darnell, Jack Oakie, Edgar Kennedy, John Philliber, Edward Brophy, George Cleveland, Sig Ruman, Paul Guilfoyle. Screen play by Dudley Nichols and Rene Clair. Direction by Rene Clair. Arnold Pressburger production. United Artists.

To all of us who have wished at times that we could look into the future, this fable will be a delight. Ingeniously devised, especially in its ending, it tells the story of the fulfillment of a reporter's dream—to be able to write tomorrow's headlines today. Novel in plot, exceptionally well acted and directed, and holding a pleasant measure of suspense, it is excellent entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

❖

JANE EYRE ◇ ◇

Orson Welles, Joan Fontaine, Margaret O'Brien, Peggy Ann Garner, John Sutton, Sara Allgood, Henry Daniell, Agnes Moorehead, Aubrey Mather, Edith Barrett. From the novel by Charlotte Bronte. Music by Bernard Herrmann. Photography by George Barnes. Direction Robert Stevenson. 20th Century-Fox.

The story of "Jane Eyre," the hapless orphan who at last found refuge in the love of the stormy master of Thornfield, is told in an unforgettable novel, and the film version also leaves a vivid impression, though in a different way. The picture has a certain wild beauty with its sombre tones and its atmosphere of deep brooding, increased by the masterly use of lighting and music. The novel was an intimate disclosure of *Jane's* thoughts and experiences. Joan Fontaine is a lovely serene *Jane,* and little Peggy Ann Garner makes the character very dear to us as a child, but no excellence of acting on their parts can keep the film from becoming the story of *Rochester.* Orson Welles dominates the picture. Although he did not direct it, his touch is apparent in the dark, massive backgrounds, the strong, melodramatic action, his own flowing garments and his declaiming of lines in the Shakespearean manner. This is not Bronte's "Jayne Eyre," but it is a fascinating production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 No. Unsuitable. Early scenes distressing

❖

LADY IN THE DARK ◇ ◇

Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland, Warner Baxter, Jon Hall, Barry Sullivan, Mischa Auer, Phyllis Brooks, Mary Philips, Edward Fielding. Screen play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, based on the play by Moss Hart. Music by Kurt Weill. Lyrics by Ira Gershwin. Director of photography, Ray Rennahan, A.S.C. Direction by Mitchell Leisen. Paramount.

To many people, the stage production was a rare combination of psychological study and dazzling pageantry such as is seen once in a lifetime. The film production falls short of that mark, but it is a glorious symphony of color, a fashion parade using deep, rich tones when the earthly scenes are portrayed and exquisite pastels in the dream sequences. Graceful dancing and inspiring music increase the aesthetic value. The center of interest is *Liza,* who doesn't "know her mind" until a psycho-analyst takes her in hand. The cast, headed by Ginger Rogers and Ray Milland, is proficient.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature

Children, 8 to 12 Far too mature

❖

LIFEBOAT ◇ ◇

Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, Walter Slezak, Mary Anderson, John Hodiak, Henry Hull, Heather Angel, Hume Cronyn, Canada Lee. Screen play by Jo Sterling, adapted from a story by John Steinbeck. Direction by Alfred Hitchcock. 20th Century-Fox.

It is a distinctive achievement to depict the survivors of a shipwreck, adrift for days in a lifeboat, without making them tiresome or melodramatic. The film is compelling in its realism, and this effect is accomplished through strong characterizations and telling dialogue. The twisted philosophy of the Nazi captain is contrasted with democratic ideals expressed by such widely divergent individuals as the American capitalist and a sim-

ple negro. The cast is superb: Tallulah Bankhead as the hard, materialistic woman journalist, Henry Hull as the decadent capitalist, William Bendix as the appealing, everyday worker, John Hodiak as the superficially pleasant but dangerous Nazi. Whether or not one reads an allegory into the tale, it is highly entertaining in the well-known Hitchcock style.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature **Children, 8 to 12** Too mature

❖

THE LODGER ◇ ◇

Merle Oberon, George Sanders, Laird Cregar, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Sara Allgood, Aubrey Mather, Queenie Leonard, Doris Lloyd. Screen play by Barre Lyndon from the novel by Mrs. Marie Belloc Lowndes. Direction by John Brahm. Produced by Robert Bassler. 20th Century-Fox.

Mrs. Marie Belloc Lowndes is known for her classic mysteries, and this one, a favorite of Alexander Woollcott, became especially popular. The story has been given an excellent cast and all the trappings of Whitehall of the nineties. It has properly dismal, damp holes for *Jack the Ripper* to hide in, and the settings and atmosphere are impressive. But the mystery is solved almost at once, and the story thus becomes one of suspense and horror with little subtle psychological interpretation of character to hold mature interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No. Very unsuitable

❖

MINESWEEPER ◇ ◇

Richard Arlen, Jean Parker, Russel Hayden, Emma Dunn, Guinn Williams. Screen play by Edward T. Lowe and Maxwell Shane. Direction by William Berke. Pine-Thomas. Paramount.

An improbable story with mediocre dialogue and music is woven around a former naval officer with a bad record of gambling, who redeems his past by heroic action on a minesweeper as a common seaman, plain *Jim Smith*. The chief asset of the picture are underwater scenes, which are accurate, exciting and unusually well done. While children might overlook the poor qualities of the film, the subject matter is not especially suitable for them.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair **Children, 8 to 12** Not recommended

❖

THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK ◇

Eddie Bracken, Betty Hutton, Diana Lynn, William Demarest, Porter Hall, Emory Parnell, Alan Bridge, Julius Tannen, Victor Potel, "McGinty" and "The Boss." Written and directed by Preston Sturges. Paramount.

"The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" has the delicate touch of a dream—one in which you get run over by a locomotive! Apparently, in striving for novelty Preston Sturges has mixed his ingredients with too much high explosive, but underneath the noisy slapstick is a really moving theme. A young man loves a girl so deeply that he offers to marry her to give his name to her unborn child. When it is discovered that she has already married a chance acquaintance when befuddled by Champagne after a party given for departing soldiers, the boy tries to free her legally from her predicament, but his efforts land him in jail; and then comes the *miracle*. Betty Hutton gives a restrained and lovely performance, and Eddie Bracken plays his role so sincerely that he wins genuine sympathy. The picture will undoubtedly entertain many adults, but for others the contrasting elements will not seem to "jell."

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

❖

MOONLIGHT IN VERMONT ◇ ◇

Gloria Jean, George Dolenz, Fay Helm, Sidney Miller. Direction by Stacy Keach, Universal.

As a starring vehicle for Gloria Jean, this is a disappointing production. The cast is made up of amateurish young singers and jitterbug dancers, and the plot is routine. A musically talented youngster from a Vermont farm enters a theatrical school in New York, but has to return home because of financial troubles. Her schoolmates follow her to Vermont, harvest her father's crop, and put on a show to raise funds to bring her back to school. Gloria Jean looks pretty, but her voice is not recorded to advantage.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair **Children, 8 to 12** Little interest

❖

NONE SHALL ESCAPE ◇ ◇

Marsha Hunt, Alexander Knox, Henry Travers, Erik Rolf, Richard Crane, Dorothy Morris, Richard Hale, Ruth Nelson, Kurt Kreuger. Screen play by Lester Cole from a story by Alfred Neumann and Joseph Than. Direction by Andre De Toth. Columbia Pictures.

This is the first film to forecast the fulfillment of the pledge by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin that those guilty of oppression and cruelty in the present war shall be held for trial. The story opens in a courtroom in Litzbark on the Silesian border of Poland, where the Nazi commandant is on trial. As each witness comes forward to give testimony, flashbacks trace the history of the accused as he was known to the Catholic priest, to a Polish woman to whom he once was engaged, and to his own brother who has never subscribed to the Nazi creed. The man's life story begins in Litzbark where he was a school teacher prior to World War I. After the war interval he returns and is cordially received, but later the community forces him to leave when he shows a sur-

prising lack of decency. When war strikes again, he becomes a Nazi official and returns for vengeance with the power at his command. The film outlines the characteristic Nazi disregard of righteousness.

It is an extremely interesting and powerful picture, directed with artistry by Andre De Toth. Alexander Knox is notable as the Nazi, and among other fine performances is that of Richard Hale as a Rabbi who exhorts his people to fight rather than submit. It is an important contribution to standards of post-war thinking.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Strong—but good
Children, 8 to 12 Too strong

❖

PASSAGE TO MARSEILLE ◇ ◇

Humphrey Bogart, Claude Rains, Michele Morgan, Philip Dorn, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre, George Tobias, Helmut Dantine, John Loder, Victor Francen, Vladimir Sokoloff, Edward Cianelli. Screen play by Casey Robinson and Jack Moffitt from a novel by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Music by Max Steiner. Photography by James Wong Howe, A.S.C. Warner Bros.

The action begins and ends at an air base of the Free French in England, a garden spot by day and a bristling bomber field by night. There *Capt. Freycinet* recounts to an American correspondent the adventures of a group of convicts who have escaped from Devil's Island with one motive, regardless of past records, to fight for the liberation of France. Their experiences are told in a series of thrilling, realistic flashbacks. It is a virile production marked by swift action and strong character delineation, containing particularly fine work by Humphrey Bogart and Claude Rains.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good action film of the war
Children, 8 to 12 Too strong

❖

PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE ◇ ◇

Elsa Lanchester, Gordon Oliver, Lenore Aubert, Lionel Royce, Fritz Feld, Joseph Vitale, Gavin Muir, Lloyd Corrigan, Anita Bolster, Lydia Bilbrook, Hans Schumm. Screen play by Val Burton and Muriel Roy Bolton. Direction by Ray McCarey. RKO.

Elsa Lanchester gives dignity and delicious humor to the characterization of a gallant little English charwoman whose belief in her passport of invincible security takes her on the most amazing adventure. It is hard to think of any one else in the role, for Miss Lanchester's unexpected and unconventional "business," her asides, and the naivete of her lines provoke many laughs Moreover, she convinces us that faith makes almost all things possible, and when in the end her primary objective is not achieved, we know that fate alone has cheated her. In the meantime her experiences have given us an intriguing hour of fantasy and an added respect for the courageous women of London who exemplify that intangible quality of stamina which the English have displayed throughout the war.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 Possibly too mature to interest

❖

PHANTOM LADY ◇ ◇

Franchot Tone, Ella Raines, Alan Curtis, Aurora, Thomas Gomez, Fay Helm, Elisha Cook, Jr., Andrew Tombes, Regis Toomey, Joseph Crehan, Doris Lloyd. Screen play by Bernard C. Schoenfeld, based on the novel by William Irish. Direction by Robert Siodmak. Associate producer, Joan Harrison. Universal.

A crazy hat is the pivotal clue in one of the best mystery pictures of the year. A man estranged from his wife spends the evening with a half dozen oddly assorted people, and when he learns that his wife has been murdered and that he is accused, none of these companions can be found to establish an alibi for him. Superbly shaded delineation of both normal and psychiatric characters in connection with the smoothly coordinated action holds the audience spellbound.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 For those over 14
Children, 8 to 12 Unsuitable

❖

RATIONING ◇ ◇

Wallace Beery, Marjorie Main, Donald Meek, Dorothy Morris, Howard Freeman, Connie Gilchrist, Tommy Batten, Gloria Dickson, Henry O'Neill, Carol Ann Beery. Original screen play by Willian R. Lipman, Grant Garrett and Harry Ruskin. Direction by Willis Goldbeck. M-G-M.

Since it is easy to fall into ways of self-pity in regard to rationing, it is good for all of us to be brought to account now and then, especially when the ribbing is administered is good humored form. In a more serious vein this picture emphasizes the cumulative effect of self-indulgence in hoarding, unnecessary use of gas, and other practices which lead to the growth of black markets. Wallace Beery and Marjorie Main are at their best, and Dorothy Morris and Tommy Batten are delightful as the young lovers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 Yes

❖

SONG OF BERNADETTE ◇ ◇

Jennifer Jones, William Eythe, Charles Bickford, Vincent Price, Lee J. Cobb, Anne Revere, Roman Bohnen, Ermadean Walters. Screen play by George Seaton from novel by Franz Werfel. Music by Alfred Newman. Photography by Arthur Miller, A.S.C. Direction by Henry King. Producer, William Perlberg. 20th Century-Fox.

Franz Werfel's book of the life of Saint Bernadette of Lourdes has been adapted to the screen with added beauty and spiritual significance. Jennifer Jones fills the part of the young peasant girl to perfection. Although she radiates human warmth, the

girl lives as one apart, pure, selfless, a mystic through whom a message may be given to the world. Besieged by the arguments of political and clerical dignitaries, she triumphs by the simple answers of truth. This is no sentimental plea for belief. Except for the cure of the infant in the Grotto spring, no miracles are verified, and the scepticism of the sophisticated is gently countered by the foreword: "For those who believe in God no explanation is necessary; for those who do not believe in God, no explanation is possible."

The photography, creating the atmosphere of a small French provincial town, is beautiful, and the music is inspiring, rising in triumphal crescendos. Many of the parts are played with rare understanding. Demonstrating the intelligent handling of a controversial theme, "Song of Bernadette" sets a high standard for films of a religious nature.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Good, although too long and mature for many

❖

SONG OF RUSSIA ◇ ◇

Robert Taylor, Susan Peters, John Hodiak, Robert Benchley, Felix Bressart, Michael Checkhov, Darryl Hickman, Jacqueline White. Screen play by Paul Jarrico and Richard Collins, based on a story by Leo Mittler, Victor Trivas and Guy Endore. Direction by Gregory Ratoff. Music adapted for the screen by Herbert Stothart. Peter Mereblum's California Junior Orchestra. Produced by Joseph Pasternak. M-G-M.

The music of Tschaikowsky, with additional numbers by modern Russian composers, conducted by Albert Coates, is used as an important element of this picture, and the compositions selected are sufficiently familiar to please the average audience. They are introduced very naturally, since the story is about *John Meredith,* an American orchestra leader who tours Russia as a guest conductor and falls in love with a brilliant young musician, *Nadya,* a peasant girl from Tschaikoye, the birthplace of the great musician. They are married, but when the Nazi invasion forces sweep over the land, *Nadya* returns to her own community to share in the labor of "scorching the earth" as a true Russian, subordinating her personal existence to her duty to her country.

Although Robert Taylor's role of a conductor is a new one for him, he fills it successfully, and Susan Peters endows the girl of modern Russia with a fine blending of efficiency and idealism. Photography is delightful in most of the scenes. The film presents a romanticized picture of Russia with lovely girls and handsome men, but there is a deeper motif, the surge of the invincible spirit of Russia and the great love of the land. In the later sequences, the documentary pictures of Russian crowds and battle scenes seem too heavy and depressing for a musical production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Romantic story and beautiful music

Children, 8 to 12 Long and some of it too somber

❖

THE SPIDER WOMAN ◇ ◇

Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Gale Sondergaard, Dennis Hoey, Vernon Downing, Alec Craig, Mary Gordon, Arthur Hohl. Screen play by Bertram Millhauser. Based on a story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Associate producer and director, Roy William Neill. Universal.

An especially ingenious plot places "The Spider Woman" among the best of the *Sherlock Holmes* series. Peculiar circumstances in connection with a number of so-called "pyjama suicides" in London cause the master detective to suspect murder. He is right, of course, and he traps the killer after assuming various disguises and risking a horrible death. Even though everyone knows that *Sherlock Holmes* must always survive to solve new mysteries, the suspense is very real, and the man-killing spider which plays an important part will give many people the creeps. The cast, as usual, is superior.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good of its kind

Children, 8 to 12 Probably frightening

❖

STANDING ROOM ONLY ◇ ◇

Fred MacMurray, Paulette Goddard, Edward Arnold, Hillary Brooke, Roland Young, Anne Revere, Clarence Kolb, Isabel Randolph. Original screen story by Al Martin. Direction by Sidney Lanfield. Paramount.

This highly amusing expose of war-time Washington attacks on three fronts: the housing shortage, the red tape methods of the bureaucracy and the servant problem, adding for good measure a trenchant satire on self-important women in uniform. In the hands of a cast adept in farcical routines and persiflage, it all adds up to a lot of irresistible merriment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

❖

THE SULLIVANS ◇ ◇

Thomas Mitchell, Selena Royle, Anne Baxter, Edward Ryan, Trudy Marshall, John Campell, James Cardwell, John Alvin, George Offerman, Jr., Roy Roberts, Ward Bond, Mary McCarty, Nancy June Robinson, Marvin Davis, Buddy Swan, Billy Cummings, Johny Calkins, John Nesbit. Screen play by Mary C. McCall, Jr. Direction by Lloyd Bacon. 20th Century-Fox.

No film has pictured the best American traditions with greater fidelity, genuineness and warmth than this simple story of a family group with their inarticulate loyalty to each other and their sense of responsibility to the country which means *Home* to them. It shows the delightful family of a freight train

conductor whose income is limited but adequate. As the children pass through the normal stages of development, a rare sense of humor softens the trials of their parents who love but discipline their brood. They grow into fine normal young people and finally respond to the call to arms. Through perseverance they receive the unusual governmental permission to be placed together on a ship. Because the tragic event which ends their careers is not overdramatized, the general effect of the film is a happy, inspirational one which leaves a glowing impression of pride in America and respect for the stamina of those left with only memories to comfort them. The casting is remarkably sympathetic, and acting and direction are exceptional. It is a "must see" film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

❖

TARZAN'S DESERT MYSTERY ◇ ◇

Johnny Weismuller, Nancy Kelly, Johnny Sheffield, Otto Kruger, Joe Sawyer, Lloyd Corrigan, Robert Lowery, Frank Puglia, Cheeta. Screen play by Ed. T. Lowe from a story by Carrol Young, based on characters created by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Direction by Wm. Thiele. Produced by Sol Lesser. RKO.

Since the unique appeal of the *Tarzan* pictures is in their naivete and complete remoteness from present-day problems, when *Tarzan* and *Boy* encounter *Nazi* saboteurs, the series loses some of its allure. The current episode is, however, still a back-to-nature fantasy with wild creatures helping their human friends and *Cheeta* practically stealing the show. *Tarzan's* mate, *Jane,* writes from England, where she is nursing soldiers, and asks *Tarzan* to procure some "fever medicine." While he and *Boy* are searching for the plant from which to distil the medicine, they cross a desert, become involved in a Nazi plot, and have various blood-curdling adventures which will prove sufficiently entertaining to *Tarzan* fans. Some of the sequences would probably terrify a sensitive child.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** Questionable

TENDER COMRADE ◇ ◇

Ginger Rogers, Robert Ryan, Ruth Hussey, Patricia Collinge, Mady Christians, Kim Hunter, Jane Darwell, Richard Martin, Mary Forbes, Richard Gaines. Screen play by Dalton Trumbo. Direction by Edward Dymtryk. RKO.

To many people this film will carry the significance of their own experiences and to them it will be an especially tender and moving drama. To others, the over-all effect may seem artificial. It tells the story of four wives of absent service men. The women work in a plane factory and pool their resources, hiring a housekeeper as part of their budget plan. Much of the film is given to flashbacks of the courtship and interrupted marriage of one of the girls (Ginger Rogers) The husband, played very beautifully by Robert Ryan, is representative of many of our finest men in the service. The lighter scenes are entertaining, but at times the pathos is overstressed and the message of the film seems a little too obvious.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** No

❖

THREE RUSSIAN GIRLS ◇ ◇

Anna Sten, Kent Smith, Mimi Forsaythe, Alexander Granach, Paul Guilfoyle, Kane, Richmond, Manart Kippen, Jack Gardner, Marcia Lenack, Mary Herriot, Anna Marie Stewart, Dorothy Gray, Feodor Chaliapin. Screen play by Aben Kandel and Dan Talbot. Direction by Fedor Ozep and Henry Kesler. United Artists.

The superb work of Russian Red Cross volunteer nurses at the front during the siege of Leningrad is treated in a singularly objective but effective manner. All the roles are well played, and the love affair between one nurse and an American aviation engineer is dignified and charming. The battle scenes on snow-capped hills are fascinating, and while the plot actually covers only a few incidents in a yet unfinished drama of epic proportions, it gives us added understanding of the men and women of an allied nation.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Possible

❖

TIMBER QUEEN ◇ ◇

Richard Arlen, Mary Beth Hughes, June Havoc, Sheldon Leonard, George E. Stone, Dick Purcell, Tony Hughes, Edmund MacDonald, Horace MacMahon. Screen play by Maxwell Shane and Edward T. Lowe. Pine-Thomas Production. Paramount.

Scenes of logging operations with giant trees against the sky and great logs floating

down the flume to the river are entertaining and spectacular, but the melodramatic plot and brawling action will not appeal to exacting audiences. It is a conflict of the wilds, with he-men of the lumber country and trigger men from the city joining in the contest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 Not recommended

❖

THE UNINVITED ◇ ◇

Ray Milland, Ruth Hussey, Donald Crisp. Cornelia Otis Skinner, Dorothy Stickney, Barbara Everest, Alan Napier, Gail Russell. Screen play by Dodie Smith and Frank Partos from the novel by Dorothy Macardle. Music by Victor Young. Direction by Lewis Allen. Produced by Charles Brackett. Paramount.

Seldom has a picture been made with such a delicate balance and such keen perception of occult values as this story of a haunted house on the rocky coast of Cornwall. Fascinated by the beauty of the place, two Londoners purchase "Windward House" and learn to know the strange and lovely young girl whose soul is sought by the contending spirits. Treatment of the theme is largely psychological. Music and sound effects are skilfully used, photography is unusually fine, and all members of the cast unite to achieve a finished performance.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Tense but very interesting

Children, 8 to 12 No. Frightening

❖

WHAT A MAN ◇ ◇

Johnny Downs, Wanda McKay, Robert Kent, Etta McDaniel, Harry Holman. Direction by Wm. Beaudine. Monogram.

With probably one of the silliest plots on record, this combination of murder mystery and success story runs an extremely dull course to an ending that leaves everybody wondering what happened and why. The story is about a meek young man who turns out to be a smart business executive and a girl who enters the picture as a mystery woman followed by detectives, spends several days hiding in the young man's bachelor establishment, vanishes, and reappears as the daughter of our hero's boss.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

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MRS. REBECCA PORTER
MRS. CHESTER A. OMMANNEY, *Preview Chairman*
MRS. E. P. FLEMING, *Business Manager*

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FEATURE FILMS

ACTION IN ARABIA ◇ ◇

George Sanders, Virginia Bruce, Lenore Aubert, Gene Lockhart, Robert Armstrong, H. B. Warner, Alan Napier, Andre Charlot, Marcel Dalio, Robert Anderson, Jamiel Hasson, Mike Ansara. Screen play by Philip MacDonald and Herbert Biberman. Direction by Leonide Moguy. RKO.

Melodramatic action fairly reeking with intrigue, is set in and around Damascus. George Sanders plays the bored newspaperman who has been recalled because he has unearthed too much evidence of Nazi coercion to conform with American diplomacy, in October, 1941. But before he gets away he finds conclusive proof of "dirty work" in tricking peaceful Arab tribes into revolt against the English. After much sculduggery he escapes after a desperate chase reminiscent of Serial action. The foreign settings and exotic characters add atmosphere, and aerial photography of huge desert caravans, picturesque realism.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good action film **Children, 8 to 12** Exciting action

❖

AND THE ANGELS SING ◇ ◇

Fred MacMurray, Dorothy Lamour, Betty Hutton, Diana Lynn, Mimi Chandler, Raymond Walburn, Eddie Foy Jr., Frank Albertson, Mikhail Rasumny, Julie Gibson, Erville Alderson, Harry Barris. Screen play by Melvin Frank and Norman Panama. Direction by George Marshall. Paramount.

This rowdy musical comedy offers a variety of entertainment, and it goes with a verve and dash that carry the spectator on a wave of fun. The opening scenes promise a delightful picture of the home life of four singing sisters who form an excellent quartette, but whose real aspirations are directed at individual success as an artist, a reporter, a concert pianist, and a dramatic actress. Father steps in to thwart their ambitions, and the situations get out of hand. The film will appeal to adults with a robust sense of humor, but the drinking scenes, with innocent young girls under the influence of liquor, will be offensive to many.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

❖

ANDY HARDY'S BLONDE TROUBLE ◇ ◇

Lewis Stone, Mickey Rooney, Fay Holden, Sara Haden, Herbert Marshall, Bonita Granville, Keye Luke, Lee Wilde, Lyn Wilde, Jean Porter. Screen play by Harry Ruskin, William Ludwig and Agnes Christine Johnston, based on character created by Aurania Rouverol. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

Identical and lovely twins add to *Andy's* usual girl trouble and add hilarity to his adjustment to college. For private reasons, the sisters pretend to be one, and *Andy* is completely befuddled, especially when he becomes interested in another blonde who is apparently romantically concerned with a professor. He is on the point of leaving school when Father appears to straighten him out. His experiences offer delightful fun

for family groups, and a bit of sound philosophy is injected in the role played by Bonita Granville as contrasted with the types portrayed by the twins.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

❖

BUFFALO BILL ◇ ◇

Joel McCrea, Maureen O'Hara, Linda Darnell, Thomas Mitchell, Edgar Buchanan, Anthony Quinn, Moroni Olsen, Frank Fenton, Matt Briggs, George Lessey. Original screen play by Frank Winch. Music by David Buttolph. Photography by Leon Shamroy, A.S.C. Direction by William A. Wellman. Produced by Harry A. Sherman. 20th Century-Fox.

Photographed in magnificent Technicolor, "Buffalo Bill" outstrips most of the Western pictures. It is the story of a man who lived among the Indians, understood them, and tried to protect them when the white men came to destroy the buffaloes, their chief food supply, and who nevertheless fought for his own people when their lives were in peril. It tells of his romantic marriage, his long years in Wild West performances, and his final return to the West he loved. It belongs to a picturesque era which stirs the imagination. Joel McCrea brings this almost legendary hero to life in a very convincing manner. The battles with Indians are stunningly projected.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Exciting but no objection for most

❖

COVER GIRL ◇ ◇

Rita Hayworth, Gene Kelly, Lee Bowman, Phil Silvers, Jinx Falkenburg, Leslie Brooks, Eve Arden, Otto Kruger, Jess Barker, Anita Colby, Curt Bois and The Cover Girls. Screen play by Virginia Van Upp from story by Erwin Gelsey. Music and lyrics by Jerome Kern and Ira Gershwin. Filmed in Technicolor. Direction by Charles Vidor. Columbia Pictures.

"Cover Girl" is a lush musical which, in addition to excellent music, good specialty acts, spectacular beauty of settings and lovely girls, has a tender love story that wins sympathy. The dancing acts are particularly worth seeing because both Rita Hayworth and Gene Kelly are stellar performers. Gene Kelly's soliloquy number is stunning in settings, photography and perfection of performance. Phil Silvers and Eve Arden add comedy. The famous Cover Girls are introduced in a beautiful sequence which is an integral part of the story. As tuneful, light entertainment it is "tops."

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

THE CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE ◇ ◇

Simone Simon, Kent Smith, Jane Randolph, Ann Carter, Elizabeth Russell, Eve Marsh, Julia Dean, Erford Gage, Sir Lancelot. Screen play by DeWitt Bodeen. Direction by Gunther V. Fritsch and Robert Wise. Produced by Val Lewton. RKO.

This title may easily give the impression of a "horror film" and keep away those who would find it most rewarding. Actually, it is an excellent psychological study of a lonely, imaginative child who accepts literally the visionary stories her elders tell her to entertain her, and whose father, hurt by a former marriage to a mentally unstable woman, is oversensitive and fearful for the lovely small daughter of his second marriage. When the child's imaginary "friend" takes the form of *Irena*, the dead woman whose picture the child has seen, the father takes drastic measures. But while the action is dramatic and exciting at times, the story is sincerely beautiful, told with rare understanding of childhood. It should hold special interest for parents. Little Ann Carter gives a sensitive and understanding performance. The cast is well rounded, with Julia Dean as an ageing actress living in the past, particularly good. Sir Lancelot brings a wholesome, delightful touch to the pleasant home life which becomes disturbed by the father's fears. It is an exceptionally interesting film presenting a problem and a constructive solution.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature but entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

❖

DAYS OF GLORY ◇ ◇

Toumanova, Gregory Peck, Alan Reed, Maria Palmer, Lowell Gilmore, Hugo Haas, Glenn Vernon, Dena Penn, Igor Dolguruki, Edward Durst, Lou Crosby. Screen play by Casey Robinson from story by Melchior Lengyel. Photography by Tony Gaudio, A.S.C. Producer: Casey Robinson. Direction by Jacques Tourneur. RKO.

The plot is woven about a group of Russian guerrillas who live in the underground rooms of a ruined monastery, emerging to harass the enemy, and who are to be used to divert the German forces when a Russian spearhead strikes at another point. The story is touching but not overpowering in its emotional effect. It has a propaganda tone, showing the people regardless of standing, age and education, selflessly united in fighting the battle of Russia. Photography by Gaudio is beautiful. Interest is particularly caught by Gregory Peck, Toumanova, and other new personalities in the cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable

Children, 8 to 12 Morbid

ESCAPE TO DANGER ◇ ◇

Eric Portman, Ann Dvorak, Karel Stepanek, Ronald Ward, Felix Aylmer, David Peel, Ronald Adam, Marjorie Rhodes, Hay Petrie, Lilly Kann. Screen play by Jack Whittingham from story by Patrick Kirwan. Direction by Leonide Moguy. British-Gaumont film. RKO.

This exceedingly interesting spy story is told with the restraint and understatement and factual quality characteristic of the British, but not always found in American pictures of this type. Added suspense is attained by having an English girl, a former teacher in Denmark who remained after the occupation and won the Nazis' confidence, prove to be a member of the underground. But when she starts for England on a Nazi mission, presumably to forward information to them, she comes under suspicion of the English counter espionage. The action may confuse some spectators, but many will find it realistic and exciting entertainment. It is distinctly out of the ordinary in plot and treatment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good of type

Children, 8 to 12 Too complicated for most

✣

THE FALCON OUT WEST ◇ ◇

Tom Conway, Carole Gallagher, Barbara Hale, Joan Barclay, Cliff Clark, Ed Gargan, Minor Watson, Lee Trent, Lyle Talbot. Original screen play by Billy Jones and Morton Grant. Music by Roy Webb. Direction by William Clemens. RKO-Radio.

When a rich rancher suddenly dies in agony on the floor of the night club where he is giving a party for his fiance, *The Falcon,* by chance, is close at hand. Later, action shifts to the far West, and there he unravels the mystery in the best Western surroundings to the accompaniment of swfit riding and stage coach driving. Tom Conway's voice duplicates George Sander's suave tones. The cast is able, and the picture attains the usual entertaining quality of the series.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good of its type

Children, 8 to 12 Rather mature

✣

FOLLOW THE BOYS ◇ ◇

George Raft. Vera Zorina, Grace McDonald, Charles Butterworth, Charley Grapewin, Ramsay Ames, Regis Toomey, Elizabeth Patterson, Theodore Von Eltz. Original screen play by Lou Breslow and Gertrude Purcell. Direction by Eddie Sutherland. Photography by David Abel. Musical direction by Leigh Harline. Universal.

"Follow the Boys" is in the nature of a report to the public on the work of the motion picture Victory Committee in keeping up the morale of service men in various camps throughout the country and in foreign lands. Here again vaudeville has come into its own with dog acts, magic shows, piano recitals, bands, top-notch singing and dancing. It is impressive to see the amount of detail involved in spotting and planning programs, working out schedules for the performers, arranging for transportation on a large scale. There is an irritating plot about a temperamental pair of actors, which fortunately is not important enough to spoil the picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes, if interested

✣

FOUR JILLS IN A JEEP ◇ ◇

Kay Francis, Carole Landis, Martha Raye, Mitzi Mayfair, John Harvey, Phil Silvers, Dick Haymes, Alice Faye, Betty Grable, Carmen Miranda, George Jessel, Jimmy Dorsey and Orchestra. Screen play by Froma Sand and Fred Niblo, Jr. Direction by William A. Seiter. 20th Century-Fox.

An ooportunity to demonstrate what our overseas U.S.O. units really accomplish has been overshadowed by the personal stories of four motion picture stars whose trip has been much publicized. It has some interest, but one show they put on for civilians is not in the best taste, and the command performance pads a weak script. However, it is possible that the girls did not want credit for what they actually did. While the film is disappointing, it gives an impression of the hardships of war travel, as well as the fun they gave and the satisfaction they must have felt in a job well done.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

✣

GOING MY WAY ◇ ◇

Bing Crosby, Rise Stevens, Barry Fitzgerald, James Brown, Jean Heather, Eily Malyon, Frank McHugh, Stanley Clemens, Jean Lockhart, Adelaide De Walt Reynolds. Screen play by Frank Butler and Frank Cavett. Direction by Leo McCarey. Paramount.

This is proof, if you need it, that movie guides are helpful, for otherwise you might conceivably miss *"Going My Way"*—that is unless you were especially attracted by the musical combination of Bing Crosby and Rise Stevens. They both sing beautifully, but the film is more than a musical. It is a drama which is so rich in the portrayal of human character that it should not be missed. It tells the tenderly moving story of a priest, a spiritual leader with wisdom, tolerance, and great understanding of human nature. And it is told with rich humor, for the young and modern priest is sent to a rundown parish to take over from an older man who distinctly does not approve the other's methods, and distrusts his gaiety, his love of sports and music. The pleasant younger man subtly does not give away the authority vested in him, but finally wins over the other.

Barry Fitzgerald's portrayal of the stubborn, childish, bewildered priest is a mas-

terpiece in picturing old age with its dignity, its pathos, and its humor. Bing Crosby gives to his role the power of a profoundly natural performance. The story deals with juvenile delinquency, the raising of the church debt, and other matters which could easily have been stereotyped, but the film has a religious quality that makes it a rare and beautiful picture of American life of which we may be justly proud.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine, and very entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

✦

HAT CHECK HONEY ◇ ◇

Grace McDonald, Leon Errol, Walter Catlett, Ramsay Ames, Richard Davis, Lee Dennett, Freddy Slack and his orchestra, Harry Owens and his Royal Hawaiians. Screen play by Al Martin. Direction by Edward F. Cline. Universal Pictures.

In order to give his son the chance for a big-time singing career, a carnival comedian breaks up the act in which the two are teamed. His son is heart-broken, thinking that his father prefers to be alone, but he finally gets his chance for success, only to find it complicated by his father's blunders. The Hollywood setting, modern music, and a story which builds a nice relationship between father and son, should please young folk particularly.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

✦

HER PRIMITIVE MAN ◇ ◇

Robert Paige, Louise Allbritton, Robert Benchley, Edward Everett Horton, Helen Broderick, Ernest Truex, Nydia Westman, Louis Jean Heydt. Original story by Dick Hyland. Direction by Charles Lamont. Universal Pictures.

This gay farce differs enough from the run-of-the-mill to sustain interest. The author of a supposedly authentic book, "Love and Death Among the Lupari Head Hunters," is exposed as a fraud by a young woman anthropologist. His ego is deflated. When he learns that she plans an expedition to bring a real head hunter into her home in order to study his responses to civilization, he is ready for her and, disguised as a savage, has a lot of fun. Robert Paige and Louise Allbritton are a bright and brittle team. Robert Benchley and Edward E. Horton amuse by just being present. It is light escapist fare which will delight the children and won't bore their elders.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Good

✦

HI, GOODLOOKIN' ◇ ◇

Harriet Hilliard, Kirby Grant, Roscoe Karns, Milburn Stone, Betty Kean, Eddy Quillan, Frank Fenton, Mary O'Brien. Screen play by Paul Smith, Bradford Ropes and Eugene Conrad. Direction by Edward Lilley. Universal Pictures.

This story of an unkown girl who came to Hollywood to try for a radio career is entertaining and has a touch of novelty in the fact that the girl does not, in order to further her career, "go Hollywood." The specialties are amusing and the scenes reveal interesting information about the technique of broadcasting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 May not be interested

✦

THE HITLER GANG ◇ ◇

Robert Watson, Roman Bohnen, Martin Kosleck, Victor Varconi, Luis Van Rooten, Alexander Pope, Alexander Granach, Reinhold Schunzel, Sig Ruman, Fritz Kortner, Gene Stutenroth, Poldy Dur, Helene Thimig. Screen play by Albert and Francis Hackett. Direction by John Farrow. Paramount.

Exceptional casting gives this picture strength and reality. The director has used restraint in picturing Hitler, whose character is drawn in detail, emphasizing his emotionalism, his egotism and lack of originality, but also showing shrewd intelligence and knowledge of psychology by which he adapts the ideas of others and holds his followers in line. It is informative rather than entertaining, but the fact that it is supported by documentary proof makes it important in our understanding of the origin and growth of the National Socialist Party.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Interesting as history

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

✦

THE HOUR BEFORE THE DAWN ◇ ◇

Franchot Tone, Veronica Lake, Binnie Barnes, John Sutton, Henry Stephenson, Philip Merivale, Leslie Dennison, Nils Asther, David Leland, Edmond Brion, Donald Stuart, Viola Moore. Adapted from novel by Somerset Maugham. Direction by Frank Tuttle. Paramount.

This film offers another good, but not notable, story of the Nazi spy, this time feminine and working as housekeeper in a middle class English family. There are certain implausibilities in the plot, but the charactrizations are so lifelike and the interest so well sustained that these may be easily overlooked. Veronica Lake makes a convincing spy, but Franchot Tone is a bit too negative even for his role of pacifist. The message of the story, the realization of the conscientious objector that freedom must and should be rewon, would have been more vital two years ago than now. However, the picture is impressive and affords good, though sombre, entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY ◇ ◇

Nelson Eddy, Charles Coburn, Constance Dowling, Ernest Cossart, Shelley Winter, Johnny "Scat" Davis, Otto Kruger, Richard Hale, Fritz Feld, Chester Conklin, Carmen Amaya and her Company. From the stage success by Maxwell Anderson. Screen play by David Boehm and Rowland Leigh. Produced and directed by Harry Joe Brown. Producers Corporation of America. United Artists.

The gay, lilting quality of the music and the satiric play on political trends is reminiscent of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. *Peter Stuyvesant,* Governor of New Amsterdam in early days, is commissioned to put down a rebellion of the tax-ridden colonists under *Bron Broeck,* whom he also plans to rob of his lady love. In true musical comedy fashion the tables are turned. Sometimes the dialogue is tedious, but the picture has many good features, including Nelson Eddy's fine singing, the seasoned comedy of Charles Coburn, abetted by Ernest Cossart, Fritz Feld and Percy Philborn, and the charm and poignant beauty of Constance Dowling. Stage settings have been designed with admirable attention to detail It is novel entertainment with excellent musical numbers

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good if they like fanciful plots

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

❖

LADY LET'S DANCE ◇ ◇

Belita, James Ellison, Walter Catlett, Frick and Frack, Lucien Littlefield, Maurice St. Clair, Emmett Vogan, Harry Harvey, Eugene Mikeler, Henry Bussy and His Orchestra. Original screen play by Peter Milne and Paul Gerard Smith. Direction by Frank Woodruff. Monogram Pictures.

Monogram has been very succcessful in allowing the camera to catch the full effect of Belita's intricate and novel routines which she performs with exquisite grace. In seeing her both as a dancer and as a skater, we realize how she adapts dancing technique to ice routines. Her dancing and skating partners are excellent, and the comedy of Frick and Frack is displayed to full advantage. The story is slight but entertaining, and the picture is an excellent substitue for an evening at the Ice Follies.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Good

♠

LADIES COURAGEOUS ◇ ◇

Loretta Young, Geraldine Fitzgerald, Richard Fraser, Anne Gwynne, Diana Barrymore, Evelyn Ankers, David Bruce, June Vincent, Lois Collier, Phillip Terry, Samuel S. Hinds, Frank Jenks. Screen play by Norman Reilly Raine and Doris Gilbert. Direction by Dimitri Tiomkin. Walter Wanger production. Universal Pictures.

This is a fictionalized story of how the WAFS became an official part of the Army, the Women's Air Force Service Pilots. It is concerned with the personal experiences of the women pilots at their army base, the way in which they spend their free time and their relationships with men. A frank view is also given of their attitude toward the work. If the film is intended to indicate how they won the confidence of the Army, it misses fire, for the impression is left that in at least two instances pilots were so concerned with their own affairs that they actually endangered the service. However, the cast is good, and the action is quite realistic in picturing the emotions, faults, ideals, and humor of the various types of women in the unit. It is fair entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Rather emotional

Children, 8 to 12 No value

♣

MEET THE PEOPLE ◇ ◇

Lucille Ball, Dick Powell, Bert Lahr, Virginia O'Brien, "Rags" Ragland, June Allyson, Steve Geray, Paul Regan, Howard Freeman, Betty Jaynes, John Craven, Morris Ankrum. Screen play by S. M. Herzig and Fred Saidy. Direction by Charles Reisner. M-G-M.

This musical offers some effective backgrounds, amusing dialogue and a few fairly good specialty acts, but the story of an actress who goes to work in a shipyard for a publicity stunt and finds herself "frozen on the job," is loosely written and singularly uninteresting. Fair entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

❖

THE MEMPHIS BELLE ◇ ◇

Paramount release. Photographed by Eighth Air Force Cameramen and Combat Members, in Technicolor, under direction of Lt. Col. William Wyler. Released by Office of War Information through War Activities Committee. Narration written by Technical Sergeant Lester Koenig, spoken by Eugene Kent and John Beal. Music written by Corporal Gail Kubic.

The Memphis Belle holds to the high standard of excellence we are learning to expect from documentary war reports. It has no plot and no simulated heroics, but it glows with the factual beauty of truth. It is a splendid contribution to our understanding of what bombing raids mean in careful planning, team work, and bravery, and also the price we pay for victory. It is an exciting and stimulating picture of the twenty-fifth mission of a single ship and its crew, but multiply this by thousands and we get an impression of what war in the air means It is exceptionally fine

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Older boys

MOON OVER LAS VEGAS ◇ ◇

Anne Gwynne, David Bruce, Vera Vague, Vivian Austin, Joe Sawyer, Alan Dinehart, Lee Patrick, Milburn Stone. Direction by Jean Yarborough. Universal Pictures.

A young couple having a tiff, arrange a legal separation, but secretly, each schemes to patch up their quarrel They both go West, planning to be "hard to get." True to farce, almost impossibly fantastic developments keep the lovers apart for the length of the picture. In more expert hands it might have been successful comedy, but the leads are too inexperienced and the plot is so slim that it fails to be very entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

✤

THE NAVY WAY ◇ ◇

Robert Lowery, Jean Parker, Bill Henry, Roscoe Karns, Robert Armstrong, Horace McMahon, Richard Powers, Sharon Douglas. Screen play by Maxwell Shane. Direction by Wm. Berke. Produced by Pine & Thomas. Paramount.

The visualization of the training given recruits in our Navy camps enhances the value of this picture. Humor blends with the seriousness of purpose as the typical heterogeneous group is molded into Navy material. It is to be regretted that the incident in which the young hero is almost dishonorably discharged on account of a drunken debauch should have involved a member of the Waves. The girl herself is above reproach, but the scene leaves an impression of the dubious value of women at training camps. However, the picture is good entertainment and the two hymns sung by the Navy choir add a note of spirituality.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Theme too mature

✤

NINE GIRLS ◇ ◇

Ann Harding, Evelyn Keyes, Jinx Falkenburg, Anita Louise, Leslie Brooks, Lynn Merrick, Jeff Donnell, Nina Foch, Shirley Mills, Marcia Mae Jones, Willard Robertson, William Demarest. Adapted from the play by Wilfrid H. Pettitt. Direction by Leigh Jason. Produced by Bert Kelly. Columbia.

Grace Thornton chaperones a group of younger sorority sisters on an initiation house party in the mountains, and there a murder mystery develops. While the murders are not adequately motivated, and the perpetrator is revealed too early in the play for high suspense, Ann Harding adds distinction to the production. Dialogue and direction are good, and comedy lightens situations which might otherwise seem macabre.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Only passable **Children, 8 to 12** No. Mature theme

ONCE UPON ATIME ◇ ◇

Cary Grant, Janet Blair. James Gleason, Ted Donaldson, Howard Freeman, William Demarest, Art Baker, Paul Stanton, Sig Arno, Mickey McGuire. Screen play by Lewis Meltzer and Oscar Saul from story by Norman Corwin and Lucille Fletcher Herrmann. Direction by Alexander Hall. Columbia Pictures.

We have here an adaptation of Norman Corwin's fantasy, "My Client Curly," written and produced for radio. It is about a disheartened and bankrupt Broadway producer who tosses his last nickel to two small boys who insist that he look at their peepshow, a dancing caterpillar who responds to the strains of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby," as played on the harmonica. Instantly the man visualizes the publicity angles possible and opens up a campaign which has unexpected results.

Fantasy is perhaps the most difficult subject to film because the screen medium seems best adapted to realism. So to some, the story told by this whimsical parable may seem too fragile and "much ado about nothing." On the other hand, many will delight in its whimsy, its satire, and in the spiritual truth to which it draws attention

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

✤

PIN-UP GIRL ◇ ◇

Betty Grable, John Harvey, Martha Raye, Joe E. Brown, Eugene Pallette, Dorothea Kent, Dave Willock, Condos Brothers, Charlie Spivak and his Orchestra. Screen play by Libbie Block. Direcion by Bruce Humberstone. 20th Century-Fox.

The title is appropriate only because the film is about a girl whose photographs were in demand with the G I's whom she served in a small town U.S O. Club—except, of course, that it stars a favorite Pin-Up Girl, Betty Grable. The action goes on to tell what happened to *Lorry* when her ambitions took her out of her element to New York and Washington. The plot is fanciful. Interest is centered on the lavish settings glamorized by Technicolor, on sprightly and tuneful music, and on the specialty acts. One roller skating sequence has spectacular beauty in performance and color, but the military finale is overlong and anti-climactic.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** Matter of taste

✤

THE PURPLE HEART ◇ ◇

Dana Andrews, Richard Conte, Farley Granger, Kevin O'Shea, Donald Barry, Trudy Marshall, Sam Levene, Chas. Russell, John Craven, Tala Birrell, Richard Loo, Peter Chong, Gregory Gaye, Toren Meyer, Kurt Katch, Martin Garralaga. Screen play by Jerome Cady from a story by Melville Crossman. Photography by Arthur Miller, A.S.C. Music by Alfred Newman. Direction by Lewis Milestone. Produced by Darryl Zanuck. 20th Century-Fox.

Although the facts surrounding the trav-

esty of justice meted out in a civil trial to the American fliers who bombed Tokyo still remain a matter of speculation, this is an exceedingly realistic picture. Most of the action takes place in the Japanese courtroom or in the prison cell where the men are returned after being tortured. While the worst scenes of the administration of physical cruelty are dispensed with, the emotional reaction to the film is almost unbearable. It is strong propaganda, very well done, with a fine cast and the best technique in all departments. Such a picture may be necessary to awaken certain elements of our population to the urgency of an all-out war effort, but it should be avoided by those having husbands, sons, or close friends in the Pacific area, or even in the air forces.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too grim

Children, 8 to 12 No

✣

SEE HERE, PRIVATE HARGROVE ◇ ◇

Robert Walker, Donna Reed, Robert Benchley, Keenan Wynn, Bob Crosby, Ray Collins, Chill Wills, Marta Linden, Grant Mitchell. Based on the book by Marion Hargrove. Screen play by Harry Kurnitz. Direction by Wesley Ruggles. M-G-M.

The main impression one gains from this film is that it is genuine. The dialogue, the acting, and the episodes selected to portray the experiences of rookies drafted from civilian life into the unknown world of the Army are all very natural, and the story is told with delightful humor. Robert Walker plays the type of young American we all know, scarcely dry behind the ears, bungling into a maturity which somehow holds the finest standards and requisites of manhood. His associates are varied enough in personality to reveal a cross section of a democratic army. The picture is important as a chronicle of our times and, best of all, it is hilariously entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

✣

SHINE ON, HARVEST MOON ◇ ◇

Ann Sheridan, Dennis Morgan, Jack Carson, Irene Manning, S. Z. Sakall, Marie Wilson, Robert Shayne, Bob Murphy, Four Step Bros., The Ashburtons, Wm. Davidson, James Bush. Based on an original screen story by Richard Weil. Music adapted by H. Roemheld. Orchestral arrangements by Frank Perkins. Musical direction by Leo F. Forbstein. Direction by David Butler. Warner Bros.

To those who remember the old days, and perhaps there are not many who do, Dennis Morgan is very much *Jack Norworth* and Ann Sheridan is—herself She is conscientiously glamorous, and at times her costumes are too daring and eccentric, although in many scenes she shows more sweetness and strength of character than is usual in her roles. Perhaps the simple, romantic singing of "Harvest Moon," which once brought down the house would be considered "corny" nowadays, but the picture, which is based on the life story of Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth, is a very good revival of the days when vaudeville was in its prime and when to appear on the Majestic stage was the height of any actor's career. There were good songs in those days, tuneful, rhythmic, haunting, and, thanks to radio, they are familiar enough to sway a modern audience.

The story describes the struggles of the now famous singing team, denied big time booking by a jealous woman and the vindictive owner of a theatre chain, until they finally got a spot in the Ziegfeld Follies. Jack Carson and Marie Wilson are sprightly fun makers as the magician and his very dumb stooge. The final sequences of the Follies in brilliant color photography are elaborately staged, and costumes are in the Ziegfeld manner.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes, but marred by a few details

Children, 8 to 12 Not very interesting

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SHOW BUSINESS ◇ ◇

Eddie Cantor, George Murphy, Joan Davis, Nancy Kelly, Constance Moore, Don Douglas, Bert Gordon. Screen play by Bert Garnet and Eddie Cantor. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. RKO.

Show Business is tuneful and entertaining. The action gives a panoramic impression of the development of an act from burlesque through vaudeville to the ensemble, which is a short step from the modern spectacular extravaganza. It is an excellent vehicle for Eddie Cantor. His comedy is often colored with pathos which makes it human and lovable, and the film revives many of the old-time melodies he has made popular through the years. The others in the cast also are excellent. The back-stage plot is unoriginal, but it seems relatively unimportant

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Matter of taste

✣

TAMPICO ◇ ◇

Edward G. Robinson, Lynn Bari, Victor McLaughlin, Robert Bailey, Marc Lawrence, E. J. Ballantine, Mona Maris, Tonio Selwart. Screen play by Kenneth Gamet, Fred Niblo, Jr., and Richard Macaulay, from an original by Ladislas Fodor. Direction by Lothar Mendes. 20th Century-Fox.

Tampico is a story of the Merchant Marine, set in the days when Nazi U-boats were taking a terrible toll of Allied shipping in the Caribbean. After a tanker is torpedoed, its captain becomes involved in a spy hunt with suspicion turning to a mysterious woman he had married in port. The colorful foreign settings are rather well done, and the

action is rugged and exciting, but the loosely plotted story lacks conviction.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Confusing ethically, and no value

Children, 8 to 12 No

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TUNISIAN VICTORY ◇ ◇

American music by Dmitri Tiomkin, Army Air Force Band, Santa Ana, Calif. British music written by William Alwyn, London Philharmonic Orchestra. M-G-M. release.

This is a great documentary picture, taken by many unnamed cameramen, often at the risk of their lives, and finally edited and assembled by an American and a British director, Frank Capra and Col. Hugh Stewart. It is a satisfaction to be told what really happened, the careful charting of the battle plan known as "Acrobat," the sudden landing on the North African coast, the tactical use of paratroopers, tank, planes, infantry. Many things make this a living production: the faces and mannerisms of boys, eager, young, like those we know; comments by the American private and the English Tommy; the expressive music which complements the action. Men fall, and we know they have fallen in death, but the horror is not stressed. There is a feeling of elation as our armies move forward to victory in the belief that they are fighting for a better day, expressed in simple words by a soldier at the end, "What a job, bringing back the smiles to kids' faces!"

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very fine

Children, 8 to 12 No. Too violent

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TWO SISTERS AND A SAILOR ◇ ◇

June Allyson, Gloria De Haven, Van Johnson, Tom Drake, Henry O'Neill, Henry Stephenson, Ben Blue, Frank Sully, Donald Meek, Carlos Ramirez, Albert Coats, Amparo Novarro, Jose Iturbi, Jimmy Durante, Gracie Allen, Lena Horne, Virginia O'Brien, The Wilde Twins, Harry James and his Orchestra with Helen Forrest, Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra with Lina Romay. Original screen play by Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman. Direction by Richard Thorpe. Produced by Joe Pasternak. M-G-M.

This musical may in all honesty be said to be "packed" with entertainment. In fact, it gives more than one's money's worth, but no one should object, for it offers diversified acts to meet every taste. The story catches our hearts from the first as it follows the careers of two lovely sisters from babyhood to maturity and shows the intriguing relationship betwteen them. Jimmy Durante has his best screen role to date and carries it expertly. The picture is excellent diversion.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Long, but matter of taste

UNCENSORED ◇ ◇

Eric Portman, Phyllis Calvert, Griffith Jones, Raymond Lovell, Peter Glenville, Frederick Culley, Irene Handle, Carl Jaffe, Stuart Lindsell. Screen play by Rodney Ackland and Terence Rattigan based on book by Oscar Millard. Direction by Anthony Crabtree. British-Gaumont Production. 20th Century-Fox.

Here is a tense and realistic story of underground newspaper activities in Belgium. It tells of the secret publication of "La Libre Belgique," a news sheet which caused headaches to the Germans in the last war and resumed its activities in this after the occupation. A music hall entertainer collects bits of information from Nazi patrons, passes them on to the publisher, and distributes some of the copies, until the chase gets hot on his trail. Photography and technique are typically British and lack Hollywood glamour, but the story is well told, holds suspense. It gives the realistic viewpoint of those who live close to war and know that events are only fragments of a larger pattern, that while one episode may turn out well, it is only because luck is with them and that the survivors in such dangerous work may have to hand the torch to others for fulfillment

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Exciting entertainment

Children, 8 to 12 No objection

❖

UNCERTAIN GLORY ◇ ◇

Errol Flynn, Paul Lucas, Jean Sullivan, James Flavin, Lucille Watson, Douglas Dumbrille, Dennis Hoey, Sheldon Leonard. Original screen play by Joe May and Lazlo Vadnay. Direction by Raoul Walsh. Music by Adolph Deutsch. Photography by Sid Hickox, A.S.C. Warner Bros.

Although the theme of patriotic sacrifice by an unworthy individual is not new, the treatment in this film is unusual. The focus of interest is not the fate of the French convict *Picard* (Errol Flynn), who remains unregenerate to the last and chooses the right path only by a hair's breadth, but the psychological struggle of the inspector (Paul Lucas) who stakes his whole career on the oath of a murderer that he will give himself up to save the lives of a hundred hostages. The picture is slow moving, and the love affair is not convincing, but characterizations are very interesting, and the photography is beautiful in dark, rich tones reminiscent of the old masters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too heavy

Children, 8 to 12 No. Unsuitable

❖

UP IN MABEL'S ROOM ◇ ◇

Marjorie Reynolds, Dennie O'Keefe, Gail Patrick, Mischa Auer, Charlotte Greenwood, Lee Bowman, John Hubbard, Binnie Barnes. From play of the same name by Otto Harbach and Wilson Collison. Direction by Allan Dwan. Edward Small-United Artists.

An old bedroom farce is revamped with

a charming and highly talented cast and is full of spontaneously funny situations Even parts which might be very risque are handled so skilfully that they are not offensive. The crux of the problem is a satin slip which a recent bridegroom bestowed upon a personable young woman on a trip to Mexico in his bachelor days, and the ruses to obtain this fluffy bit of evidence are breath-taking and hilarious. Most of the play takes place during a house party at a lovely modernized New England farmhouse while a blizzard rages outside.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable. Subject matter mature

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

❖

UP IN ARMS ◇ ◇

Danny Kaye, Dinah Shore, Dana Andrews, Constance Dowling, Louis Calhern, George Mathews, Benny Baker, Elisha Cook, Jr., Lyle Talbot, Walter Catlett, George Meeker, Richard Powers, Margaret Dumont, Donald Dickson, Charles Arnt. Screen play by Don Hartman, Allen Boretz and Robert Pirosh, suggested by Owen Davis' character, "The Nervous Wreck." Direction by Elliott Nugent. Produced by Samuel Goldwyn. RKO.

Done in Technicolor in the grand style, with pretty girls, elaborate sets, singing and dancing, this musical pictures a mad dream of what the Army is NOT. Danny Kaye, fresh from Broadway, is a sensational comedian for this kind of musical; his routines, the "Lobby Number," "Melody in 4F," "Jive Number" and others are hilarious. Dinah Shore and lovely Constance Dowling take leading parts, and they, as well as a host of Goldwyn beauties, are sure to raise the G. I. blood pressure.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes, if it meets their taste

❖

VOICE IN THE WIND ◇ ◇

Francis Lederer, Sigrid Gurie, J. Edward Bromberg, J. Carrol Naish, Alexander Granach, Olga Fabian, David Kota, Jacqueline Dalya. Screen play by Frederick Torberg from an original story by Arthur Ripley. Direction of Arthur Ripley. United Artists.

This gives an eloquent picture of the mental breakdown of a sensitive artist unable to endure Nazi torture. Its treatment is mainly through a psychological approach which produces a vivid impression of inner emotional turmoil. Each member of the cast is excellent. Photography, music score and direction complement each other in an artistic, if depressing production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature

Children, 8 to 12 No

THE WHISTLER ◇ ◇

Richard Dix, J. Carrol Naish, Gloria Stuart, Alan Dinehart, Don Costello, Joan Woodbury. Screen play by Eric Taylor, story by J. Donald Wilson, suggested by the C.B.S. program. Direction by William Castle. Columbia.

Announced as the first of a series of pictures based on the radio program of the same name, "The Whistler" has little to recommend it. The plot is concerned with one *Earl Conrad,* harassed by insinuations of his one-time friends that he was responsible for the loss of his wife in a shipwreck. He hires a professional killer to put an end to his miserable existence. He survives all perils, which seems rather a pity. The picture points no moral and is mediocre in every way.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor

Children, 8 to 12 Impossible

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THE WHITE CLIFFS ◇ ◇

Irene Dunne, Alan Marshal, Roddy McDowell, Frank Morgan, Van Johnson, C. Aubrey Smith, Dame May Whitty, Gladys Cooper, Peter Lawford, John Warburton, Jill Esmond, Brenda Forbes, Norma Varden. Based on the poem by Alice Duer Miller. Screen play by Claudine West, Jan Lustig and George Froeschel. Art director: Cedric Gibbons. Musical score by Herbert Stothart. Direction by Clarence Brown. Produced by Sidney Franklin. M-G-M.

Alice Duer Miller's beautiful narrative poem has been used as the basis of a deeply touching picture. Little has been added to the original story, only enough action to complement and expand the verse form to picture requirements. It remains the story of an American girl who marries into a great old English family and loves her foster country so deeply that that she is able to remain unembittered, although she has lost her husband and her son in wars for the protection of the kingdom. Again we feel the significance of the poem, that in spite of minor differences, the Americans and English are one people in fundamental beliefs and ideals. The picture is very well done. Irene Dunne is particularly lovely, often in an ethereal way, but she remains human. These people, with their amusing foibles, are all true to life. It is hard to forget Frank Morgan and C. Aubrey Smith fighting over the chess set taken from the White House in 1812. Alan Marshal is well cast; Roddy McDowell is as appealing as ever; all parts are competently acted. The atmosphere of the days of the first World War is well established by details of furniture, transportation, women's clothes, soldiers' uniforms. Although the picture is sad, it is inspiring, carrying a message of hope for a world in which such great sacrifices will no longer be required.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Too sad

THE YELLOW CANARY ◇ ◇

Anna Neagle, Richard Greene, Nova Pilbeam, Albert Lieven, Lucie Mannheim, Margaret Rutherford, Patric Curwan, Marjorie Fielding. Screen play by Milles Malleson and De Witt Bodean from a story by D. M. Bower. Producer-director: Herbert Wilcox. Photography by Max Green. RKO-British.

"Yellow Canary" is one of the excellent English spy stories. It moves along at a brisk tempo with hugh suspense so that the audience is kept in doubt, not only of the final outcome, but even of the national allegiance of the main characters. Tension is relieved by nonchalant repartee and typically English touches of humor. Action takes place aboard an ocean liner and in the port of Halifax, where destruction on a gigantic scale is plotted against the Allies. The cast, headed by Anna Neagle and Richard Greene, is notable for vivid characterizations. Sound effects are impressive with a fine musical score played by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unusual spy film

Children, 8 to 12 No. Too tense

♣

YOU CAN'T RATION LOVE ◇ ◇

Betty Rhodes, Johnnie Johnston, Bill Edwards, Marjorie Weaver, Marie Wilson, Johnnie "Scat" Davis, Mabel Paige, Jean Wallace. Original screen play by Val Burton and H. L. Fimbert. Direction by Lester Fuller. Paramount.

This is another college movie for the strictly non-college trade. The prototype of the hero, *John*, is undoubtedly Frank Sinatra *John* rises from the college ranks to heights where the girls mob him because of his fascinating croon. The film has an original inception, rationing the few men left on the college campus to a preponderant group of attractive young girls, but it uses cheap devices and unpleasant inferences to achieve its end. Betty Rhodes is a delightful heroine, and there are some good radio entertainers who add a skilful touch, but on the whole this is mediocre fare.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor idea of college

Children, 8 to 12 No

★ ★ ★

SHORT SUBJECTS

THE NEGRO SOLDIER ◇ ◇

U. S. War Department. Produced by U. S. Signal Corps under supervision of Col. Frank Capra and the direction of Captain Stuart Heisler.

This exceptional documentary outlines the Negro's contribution in the making of America and the part he played throughout the history of this country in peace time industry and in warfare. It contrasts Hitler's ideology with that of the Allies and is an important and valuable film. Mature family

♣

OVER THE WALL ◇ ◇

Warner Bros. 2 reels.

The suspense created by the short drama of the reformation of a criminal is sustained to the very end. The change in the prisoner is extremely well done for so short a space of development. The picture is good for all age groups, for at no time is sympathy turned toward the criminal yet the priest's unfailing belief in mankind is shown. to be justified.

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Mrs. Palmer Cook Mrs. J. Allen Davis Mrs. Laura O. Vruwink
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FEATURE FILMS

ADDRESS UNKNOWN ◇ ◇

Paul Lucas, Carl Esmond, Peter Van Eyck, Mady Christians, Morris Carnovsky, K. T. Stevens, Emory Parnell, Mary Young. Screen play by Herbert Dalmas from the story by Kressman Taylor. Producer-director: William Cameron Menzies.

Dramatized from a short story widely read when it appeared in "The Reader's Digest" a few years ago, "Address Unknown" is the explanation of a letter so designated when it was returned to San Francisco. *Martin Schultz,* associated with a Jew in an art shop, returns to his native Germany and becomes so potently inoculated with Nazi ideas that he fails to protect his partner's gifted young daughter when she is persecuted for her race. The retribution visited upon *Martin* is just and final. Paul Lucas gives a finely shaded interpretation of a compelling if unsympathetic role. Possibly the plot seemed more novel when it appeared in written form.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too tense **Children, 8 to 12** Unsuitable

THE ADVENTURES OF MARK TWAIN ◇

Fredric March, Alexis Smith, Donald Crisp, Alan Hale, C. Aubrey Smith, John Carradine, Bill Henry, Robert Barrat, Walter Hampden, Joyce Reynolds, Whitford Kane, Percy Kilbride, Nana Bryant, Willie Best. Screen play by Alan LeMay, based on works of Mark Twain and the play "Mark Twain" by Harold M. Sherman. Music by Max Steiner. Musical direction by Leo F. Forbstein. Photography by Sol Polito, A.S.C. Direction by Irving Rapper. Produced by Jesse L. Lasky. Warner Bros.

The spirit of the great Mississippi River, its importance in moulding our national character, flows through this picture as it did through Mark Twain's life and writings. From the moment when the appearance of Halley's Comet in the sky ushered him into the world, until its reappearance signalled the time of his death, the film reveals the most interesting and significant phases of his life: the early days along the great river, recorded in the stories of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn;* his adventures in Virginia City as a newspaper

reporter and in other parts of the West where he won his first recognition by writing "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County"; his marriage; his later days as a world-famous lecturer. The result is a complete and unified impression of the man as he was, gifted, idealistic, close to earth and to the people he knew. Fredric March's portrayal gives us the pleasant experience of feeling that he really knew Mark Twain, a great humorist and a fine American who had faith in democracy.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent
Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

✣

ALLERGIC TO LOVE ◇ ◇

Noah Beery, Jr., Martha O'Driscoll, David Bruce, Franklin Pangborn, Slapsie Maxie Rosenbloom, Fuzzy Knight, John Hamilton, Henry Armetta. Screen play by Warren Wilson from an original story by Warren Wilson, Jack Townley and John Larkin, Direction by Edward Lilley. Universal.

The luxurious settings of a huge steamship Rio bound, and the handsomely appointed surroundings of South American hotels and gay spots seem too ambitious a background for a very light and frivolous farce about a young bride who sneezes every time she is near her husband. Some may approve of Noah Beery, Jr., in a rich, playboy role, and others will hope for his return to the range.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 All right
Children, 8 to 12 Nothing objectionable

✣

AN AMERICAN ROMANCE ◇ ◇

Brian Donlevy, Ann Richards, Walter Able, John Qualen, Horace McNally, Fred Brady. Screen play by Herbert Dalmas and William Ludwig based upon a story by Charles K. Wallis. Musical score by Louis Gruenberg. Photography by Harold Rosson, A.S.C. Direction by King Vidor. M-G-M.

In spite of several very good sequences, this film fails to be inspiring enough or interesting enough to justify its extreme length. Much of the material is too familiar (the story of an emigrant who becomes an industrial power); and the treatment of labor is handled without imagination or reality. Brian Donlevy, handicapped by poorly written dialogue, gives an oversimplified characterization. On the other hand, color dramatizes the industial scenes, the cross-country trek, and the inspiring sight of the New York skyline as seen from the immigrant ship. The picture is an intellectual study which in no way grips the emotions. This may account for its tedious effect.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste
Children, 8 to 12 Long and one harrowing scene

ATTACK—THE BATTLE FOR NEW BRITAIN

Six reel documentary filmed by U. S. Signal Corps and Air Force Cameramen, during invasion of Arawa and Cape Gloucester in South Pacific Area. Office of War Information. R.K.O.

As Ernie Pyle says, "This is your war," and the U. S. Signal Corps is accomplishing a magnificent feat in reporting it honestly to us. This documentary gives us a vivid and thrilling picture of landing operations, demonstrating just what an invasion means in blood and brawn and brains. No other report has illustrated so clearly the perfect coordination of the various branches of the service by which each individual soldier knows exactly what he is to do and how to do it. The action opens in the staging area where the training, rehearsing and briefing take place, and it continues through one day of attack. The film is realistic, dramatic, informative and inspiring, and it does not spare us the knowledge of the price we pay for victory.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good
Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

✣

BATHING BEAUTY ◇ ◇

Red Skelton, Esther Williams, Basil Rathbone, Bill Goodwin, Jean Parker, Nana Bryant, Carlos Ramirez. Musical direction by Johnnie Green. Direction by George Sidney. M-G-M.

This excellent musical has comedy skits and songs and orchestral numbers so logically interpolated into the plot that they do not divert interest but complement the story. Red Skelton is at his best and gives two exceedingly amusing pantomimes. The popular music is well presented, color is unusually fine, and the water carnival with lovely Esther Williams as the star, is an exquisitely beautiful exhibition.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent
Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

✣

BERMUDA MYSTERY ◇ ◇

Preston Foster, Ann Rutherford, Charles Butterworth, Helene Reynolds, Jean Howard, Richard Lane, Roland Drew, John Eldredge. Screen play by W. Scott Darling from a story by John Larkin. Direction by Benjamin Stoloff. 20th-Fox.

The theme of this mystery reminds one of the old doggerel, "Six little Indians, now there are five," as murder takes its toll. It never rises above average, and it is not too difficult to put one's finger on the criminal. Six veterans of the first World War make up a fund of $10,000 to be divided among the survivors ten years later. Just before that date they begin to drop off.

Constance, niece of the first casualty, engages in outrageous tricks to seek evidence and meanwhile expends her surplus energy trying to capture the personable detective.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS ◇ ◇

John Garfield, Paul Henreid, Sidney Greenstreet, Eleanor Parker, Edmund Gwenn, George Tobias, George Coulouris, Faye Emerson, Sara Allgood, Dennis King, Isobel Elsom, Gilbert Emery. Screen play by Daniel Fuchs based on the play "Outward Bound." Photography by Carl Guthrie, A. S. C. Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Direction by Edward A. Blatt. Produced by Mark Hellinger. Warner Bros.

"Outward Bound," from which this is adapted, was made originally in movie form in 1931 by Warner Bros. with Leslie Howard, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., and Helen Chandler supported by an all-star cast. The present version, brought up to the present time, 1944, does not create quite the same delicate atmosphere of the supernatural, but it is good fantasy and may attract general approval. It is the story of a varied assortment of people, newly dead, on a ghostly ship sailing toward an ultimate destination of a heaven or hell of each one's creation. Among them are two suicides who must forever shuttle back and forth bringing the dead to the celestial Examiner. While there are certain moments of arresting sentiment and moving beauty, and the picture will always have novelty for those who have not seen it before, this version seems long, and several of the cast have shown more distinction in other roles.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 Too somber and mature

❖

THE CANTERVILLE GHOST ◇ ◇

Charles Laughton, Robert Young, Margaret O'Brien, William Gargan, Reginald Owen, Rags Ragland, Una O'Connor, Donald Stewart, Elizabeth Risdon, Frank Fay, Lumaden Hare, Mike Kasurki, William Moss. Screen play by Edwin Harvey Blum based on story by Oscar Wilde. Direction by Jules Dassin.

Oscar Wilde's fantasy, brought up-to-date, is the jolliest ghost story imaginable. It tells about a pitiful, tired old ghost, one *Sir Simon de Canterbury*, who cannot rest peacefully in his grave until some member of his family shall have exhibited bravery, all of his descendants having displayed shocking examples of cowardice. Then in the present war come American Rangers to be bivouacked in the ancestral castle where six-year-old *Lady Jessica* holds forth, and among the Rangers is an American member of the family. Their reactions to the ghostly presence are very funny. Charles Laughton has a field day as the Medieval Ghost weary of haunting, and Margaret O'Brien and Robert Young are delightful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Good unless oversensitive

❖

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY ◇ ◇

Deanna Durbin, Gene Kelly, Dean Harens, Gale Sondergaard, Richard Whorf, Gladys George. From the story by W. Somerset Maugham. Score and musical direction by H. J. Salter. Direction by Robert Siodmak. Photography by Woody Bredell. Universal.

Deanna Durbin is not quite mature enough to play the emotional role she essays in this introspective, psychological study of a girl who punishes herself for the weakness in her husband's character. Gene Kelly gives the scapegrace *Robert Manette* reality and a certain fascination, and Gale Sondergaard is excellent as his mother. The memorable parts of the film are the Philharmonic concert scenes, the Christmas Mass, and the lovely old-world settings of New Orleans. But the strength of Somerset Maugham's story is not realized.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sombre

Children, 8 to 12 Definitely no

❖

DOUBLE INDEMNITY ◇ ◇

Fred MacMurray, Barbara Stanwyk, Edward G. Robinson, Porter Hall, Jean Heather, Byron Barr, Richard Gaines, John Philliber, Tom Powers, Fortunio Bonanova, Betty Farrington. From the novel by James M. Cain. Direction by Billy Wilder. Paramount.

If crime is to be pictured this is perfectly treated, for no sympathy is aroused for the perpetrator, only a normal feeling of regret that a man could be so fascinated by a despicable woman that he would wreck his life. It is the story of "the perfect crime," a murder planned with meticulous care that it might have passed as accidental death (hence the double indemnity in the insurance claim), had not the two participants become suspicious of each other. The story is told in flashbacks. Direction and acting are excellent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended because of subject matter

Children, 8 to 12 No. Unsuitable

❖

THE EVE OF ST. MARK ◇ ◇

Anne Baxter, William Eythe, Michael O'Shea, Vincent Price, Ruth Nelson, Ray Collins, Stanley Prager, Henry Morgan, Robert Bailey, Joann Dolan, Toni Favor, George Mathews, John Archer, Murray Alper. Screen play by George Seaton from the drama by Maxwell Anderson. Music by Alfred Newman. Direction by John M. Stahl. Photography by Joseph La Shelle, A.S.C. 20th-Fox.

While the film perhaps is not so strong as

the stage play, which offered no hope for a happy ending, this is still a fine drama. A group of American soldiers, fever-ridden and desperate, fight a delaying action on Bataan, and in soul-trying moments give articulate expression to the philosophy of fighting men, to the spiritual impulses which impel them to die for the things they believe in. These soldiers vary widely in temperament: the fine, young farm boy whose home ties give him moral protection; the tough, hardened rookie from the underprivileged class; the Harvard student, poet, idealist, disillusioned and unhappy, but reawakened to fight for a high ideal. It is well acted, impressive, very moving at times.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Will interest only the older ones

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

✣

GASLIGHT ◇ ◇

Ingrid Bergman, Charles Boyer, Joseph Cotten, Dame May Whitty, Angela Lansbury, Barbara Everest. Screen play by Joan Van Druten, Walter Reisch and John L. Balderston from the play by Patrick Hamilton. Direction by George Zukor. Music by Bronislau Kaper. M.G.M.

In this psychological treatment of a crime, a murderer uses the power of suggestion on an impressionable woman by casually uttered, subtle devices of calculated cruelty, seeking to convince her that she is going mad. In the dim recesses of a mid-Victorian house, the gaslight flickers, then flares forth, as the inscrutable master comes and goes. Ingrid Bergman is wonderful as the young wife whose joy in her absorbing love for her husband is contrasted with her feeling of uncertainty in herself, slowly developing into abject terror. Charles Boyer gives a pervading tone of menace to the character he plays and is excellent in his interpretation. The only relief from the tense and cumulative horror of the plot is in the character depiction of the maid (Angela Lansbury) and other members of the household staff. Settings, music and all production values rate high.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Subject matter doubtful. Well done

Children, 8 to 12 No

✣

GHOST CATCHERS ◇ ◇

Ole Olsen, Chic Johnson, Walter Catlett, Martha O'Driscoll, Gloria Jean, Kirby Grant, Leo Carrillo, Lon Chaney, Andy Devine, Thor Johnson. Screen play by Edmund L. Hartmann. Direction by Edward Cline. Universal Pictures.

It is necessary to be a whole-hearted Olsen and Johnson fan to enjoy "Ghost Catchers," because its noisy, wacky slapstick is more pointless than ever, and there are good specialty acts to relieve the tedium. The macabre action will terrify children.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 No

GIRL IN THE CASE ◇ ◇

Edmund Lowe, Hanis Carter, Bob Williams, Richard Hale, Stanley Clements, Carole Mathews, Robert Scott, Dick Elliott. Screen play by Joseph Hoffman and Dorcas Cochran. Story by Charles F. Royal. Direction by William Berke. Columbia.

Marital bickering and crime detection combined with some delightfully ridiculous situations are the chief elements in this slapstick farce. A lawyer whose hobby is picking locks uses his skill in various situations, sometimes amusing and sometimes dangerous. Eventually he aids the police in uncovering a Nazi plot and thereby temporarily reestablishes himself in the good graces of his frivolous young wife. The picture makes an amusing program filler.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 No

✣

THE GREAT MOMENT ◇ ◇

Joel McCrea, Betty Field, Harry Carey, William Demarest, Louis Jean Heydt, Julian Tannen, Edwin Maxwell, Porter Hall, Franklin Pangborn, Grady Sutton, Written and directed by Preston Sturges. Paramount.

This film promises great interest which is not realized because of inept treatment of the subject matter. It is a biographical portrayal of Dr. W. T. G. Morton, who discovered anaesthesia. His secret revolutionized surgery but brought him, instead of reward and recognition, the disgrace of being branded a charlatan. The crude surgical methods of the period are made the basis of broad comedy which shocks rather than amuses. Medical ethics appear to be violated by an attempt to patent a relief for pain, and the flashbacks do not adequately explain the ending which would seem to vindicate Dr. Morton. The story is not sufficiently informative to compensate for the unpleasant features.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

♣

HAIL THE CONQUERING HERO ◇ ◇

Eddie Bracken, Ella Raines, Bill Edwards, Raymond Walburn, Franklin Pangborn, William Demarest, Freddie Steele, Len Handry, James Damore, Stephen Gregory, Jimmie Dundee, Miriam Franklin, Georgia Caine, Elizabeth Patterson. Written and directed by Preston Sturges. Paramount.

In this film we have Preston Sturges at his best in a delicate and moving story. The superlative cast is complemented by smooth direction emphasizing delicious comedy and subtle satire. It is the story of the son of a Marine hero of World War I who is discharged after one month"s service because of a physical disability. Because his mother and the friends of his father expect so much of him, and because through a misunderstanding they believe that he has been on Guadalcanal, he is too embarrassed to go

home. How six Marine veterans of that engagement settle matters is the basis of the plot. The unhappy "hero" is placed in hilariously difficult situations but ultimately proves that he is as worthy of respect and as courageous as any man on the firing line. One charm of the film is that no controversial element has been injected.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Too mature

❖

THE HAIRY APE ◇ ◇

William Bendix, Susan Hayward, John Loder, Dorothy Comingore, Roman Bohmen, Tom Fadden, Alan Napier, Charles Cane. From the play by Eugene O'Neill. Musical direction by Eddie Paul. Original compositions by Michael Michelet. Direction by Alfred Santell. United Artists.

Fine acting and an impressive musical background are assets of this film. But the whole atmosphere is stark and ugly. It dramatizes the psychological upheaval which takes place in the mind of a stoker who suddenly views himself through the eyes of a pampered society girl. Proud of his strength and his part in vitalizing a great ship, he receives a crushing blow to his self-esteem when the girl, happening to see him at work, is obviously repelled by his appearance. He magnifies the incident until he is obsessed by the desire to kill her in revenge. Why he is diverted from his resolve is not convincingly shown, and the romantic attachment of a young ship's officer for the egotistical girl is hardly credible.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unpleasant and not sufficiently entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** No

❖

HENRY ALDRICH PLAYS CUPID ◇ ◇

Jimmy Lydon, Charles Smith, John Litel, Olive Blakeney, Diana Lynn, Vaughn Gia Ser, Vera Vague, Paul Harvey. Screen play by Val Burton and Muriel Bolton. Story by Aleen Leslie. Direction by Hugh Bennett. Produced by Walter MacEwen. Paramount.

This episode in *Henry Aldrich's* absurd misadventures is wholesome fun for those who enjoy the series. As a self-appointed matrimonial agent, *Henry* attempts to bring romance to one of his instructors at school and gets himself into a lot of trouble. The situations no doubt are exaggerated, but the picture of family life is human and appealing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

HEY ROOKIE ◇ ◇

Joe Besser, Ann Miller, Larry Parks, Joe Sawyer, Jimmy Little, Selmer Jackson, Larry Thompson, Barbara Brown, Chas. Trowbridge, Chas. Wilson, Hi-Lo-Jack and the Dame, Condos Bros., The Vagabonds, etc. based on the musical play by E. B. and Doris Colvan. Produced upon the stage by the original Yard Bird Club of Fort MacArthur for the benefit of the Athletic and Recreation Fund of Fort MacArthur. Direction by Charles Barton. Columbia.

Losing, by the use of girls in the cast, the novelty of the all-Army show produced by the boys of Fort MacArthur, this will be somewhat disappointing to those who saw the original revue. *Jim Lighter,* a theatrical producer, inducted into the service, is picked to stage an Army show. He visions an expensive, spectacular affair, but is brought down to earth by the announcement that he has $200 to spend for everything, including the erection of his own theater. Some of Joe Besser's slapstick is funny, and there is a good song or two, notably "America's Boy," but on the whole it is only fair entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Amusing

❖

HOME IN INDIANA ◇ ◇

Walter Brennan, Lou McCallister, Jeanne Crain, Charlotte Greenwood, Ward Bond, Charles Dingle. Screen play by Winston Miller, based on the Saturday Evening Post story, "The Phantom Filly," by George Agnew Chamberlain. Direction by Henry Hathaway. 20th-Fox.

Far removed from the war films, this is a story of a horse breeding farm and the old sulky races. *Sparke Thornton,* a young orphan boy, is sent to the Indiana farm of an aunt and uncle who have known more prosperous days. He spends many glorious hours training the horse he loves and wins once and again. It is a delightfully human story of the Middle West presented in Technicolor, giving a warm picture of the people whose love of horse-racing has entered into their blood, not for the object of gambling but for the glory of the sport itself.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Good

❖

I LOVE A SOLDIER ◇ ◇

Paulette Goddard, Sonny Tufts, Beulah Bondi, Walter Sande, Mary Treen, Ann Doran, Marie MacDonald, James Bell, Barry Fitzgerald. Written by Allan Scott. Produced and directed by Mark Sandrich. Paramount.

This well-balanced, human drama deviates from the usual pattern of "boy meets girl," and the emotional and topical theme based on war marriage is an interesting one. Paulette Goddard plays a girl who has character and poise, whose love conflicts with fear, but who comes to realize that one

must have faith in life, accept its uncertainties and take its gifts on life's own terms. The acting is excellent, and comedy balances the serious theme.

Adolescents, 12 to 15 Needs adult evaluation

Children, 8 to 12 No interest and unsuitable

❖

THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE ◇ ◇

Jon Hall, Alan Curtis, Evelyn Ankers, Leon Errol, John Carradine, Gale Sondergaard, Lester Mathews, Halliwell Hobbes. Original screen play by Bertram Millhauser. Suggested by "The Invisible Man" by H. G. Wells. Direction by Ford Beebe. Universal.

Trick photography is the main interest of this fantastic picture. Returning to England from horrible experiences in South Africa, and five years he cannot remember, *Robert Griffin* finds that his fortune, acquired in a diamond field, has been lost by his old friend *Jasper*. He engages the services of a crazed doctor (Carradine) who, experimenting on dogs, has learned how to make creatures invisible. Through the doctor's discovery, *Griffin* likewise becomes invisible and makes life unbearable for his former friend. The only way he can be restored to visibility is by blood transfusion and it takes a whole body's content of that.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

JOHNNY DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE

Simone Simon, William Terry, James Ellison, Gladys Burke, Brady Sutton, Minna Gombel, Chester Clute, Froggy Laughlin. Chick Chandler, Bob Mitchum. From a Liberty Magazine story by Alice Means Reeve. Direction by Joe May. Produced by Maurice King. Monogram.

When *Kathie* spills salt in the dining car en route to Washington, she releases a gremlin who hops in and out of her life for seven weeks of bad luck. Soon she meets *Johnny* and while insisting that he rent his apartment to her, fails to discover that he has given duplicate keys to various friends in the service and out. They begin to arrive. It is all quite funny, and even possible in this mixed-up world, a play with sufficient plot, amusing dialogue and enough sophistication to give it spice.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Amusing

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

♣

LADIES OF WASHINGTON ◇ ◇

Trudy Marshall, Ronald Graham, Anthony Quinn, Sheila Ryan, Robert Bailey, Beverly Whitney, Jackie Paley, John Philliber, Doris Merrick. Original screen play by Wanda Tuchock. Direction by Louis King. 20th-Fox.

Of the many films set in wartime Washington, this is one of the least entertaining. In spite of an attractive cast and the current interest of the locale, the total effect is distasteful. The leading character, a pretty young woman, turns out to be not only an obnoxious gold digger, but a paranoiac as well, and the story is cheaply melodramatic.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

MAKE YOUR OWN BED ◇ ◇

Jack Carson, Jane Wyman, Alan Hale, Irene Manning, George Tobias, Robert Shayne, Tala Birell, Ricardo Cortez. Screen play by Francis Swann and Edmund Joseph from a play by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford. Direction by Peter Godfrey. Warner Bros.

Too many complicated situations spoil this farcical mystery story, which is embroiled with servant problems, Nazi intrigues, and marital discord. Although the cast is capable of carrying good comedy situations, the plot is developed with little originality and becomes too suggestive at times.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Confusing and in questionable taste

Children, 8 to 12 Poor

❖

MAN FROM FRISCO ◇ ◇

Michael O'Shea, Anne Shirley, Ray Walker, Gene Lockhart, Tommy Bond, Dan Duryea, Ann Shoemaker, Stephanie Bachelor, Robert Warwick, Forbes Murray. Original screen story by George Carleton Brown. Direction by Robert Florey. Produced by Albert J. Cohen. Republic.

A great shipbuilding plant such as that of Henry J. Kaiser at Richmond, Calif., makes a fascinating background for a story which is human in its appeal and has an interesting plot. *Mat Braddock,* masterful, utterly ruthless in his dealings, tries without success to introduce time-saving methods, until the disaster at Pearl Harbor changes the viewpoint of workers at the plant.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Interesting

Children, 8 to 12 Might interest

♠

MARINE RAIDERS ◇ ◇

Pat O'Brien, Robert Ryan, Ruth Hussey, Frank McHugh, Barton McLane, Edmund Glover, Russell Wade, Robert Anderson, Michael St. Angel, Martha MacVicar, Harry Brown. Screen play by Warren Duff from a story by Martin Rackin and Warren Duff. Direction by Harold Schuster. R.K.O.

This is a story of war, showing the high standard of conduct expected of each Marine, the cruel toll of battle, and the treacherousness of the opposing enemy in the Pacific. However, the film has not the realism of a documentary, for the interest is centered on a war marriage, sudden, emotional and temporarily thwarted. It seems to encourage marriage on short acquaintance, and for this reason the picture's social value is debatable.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Doubtful

Children, 8 to 12 No value

THE MASK OF DIMITRIOS ◇ ◇

Sydney Greenstreet, Zachary Scott, Faye Emerson, Peter Lorre, Victor Francen, Steven Geray, Florence Bates, Edward Ciannelli, Kurt Katch, Marjorie Hoshelle,, Georges Metaxa, John Abbott. Adapted from novel "A Coffin for Dimetrios" by Eric Ambler. Direction by Jean Negulesco. Warner Bros.

Technically this film achieves distinction, particularly in the field of photography. It tells a story of crime and violence, sombre and drab in details, beginning in Istambul, where in massive and gloomy surroundings the strange *Dimitrios* pursues his abnormal craving for gold and starts a drama of political intrigue. It is rather heavy fare and will interest few except those who enjoy vicarious experiences in crime.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 Complicated and unsuitable

MINSTREL MAN ◇ ◇

Benny Fields, Gladys George, Alan Dinehart, Roscoe Karns, Judy Clark, Gloria Petroff, Molly Lamont, Jerome Cowan. Original screen play by Martin Mooney and Raymond L. Schrock. Music score by Ferde Grofe. Direction by Joseph H. Lewis. P.R.C.

This is a smooth blending of song and story, featuring Benny Fields, whose style and personality establish him as a favorite with another generation of playgoers. The music revives the still popular "Melancholy Baby." Scenes of the old-time minstrel show and the modern adaptation are very well done. Interest is held throughout, and the tuneful score pleases with its nostalgic, melodic character.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

MR. SKEFFINGTON ◇ ◇

Bette Davis, Claude Rains, Walter Abel, Richard Waring, George Coulouris, Marjorie Riordan, Robert Shayne, John Alexander. Screen play by Julius J., and Philip G. Epstein from a story by "Elizabeth." Direction by Vincent Sherman. Music by Franz Waxman. Photography by Ernest Maller, A.S.C. Warner Bros.

In a happier time than the present, this story of consuming vanity would have at least aroused intellectual curiosity. Today it seems trivial and somewhat unwholesome because it is not representative of anything worth preserving. The theme, that a woman is beautiful when she is loved, is weakened by the ending, for *Fanny Trellis* never earned the right to be cherished. The production is well done except for the preposterous make-up Miss Davis uses to simulate age. The settings are interesting and the musical score very beautiful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No value

Children, 8 to 12 Would not interest

A NIGHT OF ADVENTURE ◇ ◇

Tom Conway, Audrey Long, Edward Brophy, Louis Borell, Addison Richards, Jean Brooks, Nancy Gates, Russell Hopton. Screen play by Crane Wilbur. Based upon the play "Hat, Coat and Glove" by Wilhelm Speyer. Direction by Gordon Douglas. R.K.O.

Novel complications and an intresting presentation of evidence make this a better than average courtroom drama. A noted criminal lawyer acts as defense counsel for a man charged with murder, although circumstances have so involved the lawyer that, if certain facts were known, he himself would be equally suspect. Suspense is maintained by keeping the audience guessing how the lawyer can clear his client without implicating himself. The courtroom scenes are apparently in accordance with accepted procedure, and the characters are well defined.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable though sophisticated in content

Children, 8 to 12 No

OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY ◇

Gail Russell, Diana Lynn, Charles Ruggles, Dorothy Gish, Beulah Bondi, James Brown, Bill Edwards, Jean Heather, Alma Kruger, Helen Freeman. Screen play by Sheridan Gibney from the book by Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kimbrough. Music score by Werner Heymann. Photography by Theodor Sparkuhl, A.S.C. Direction by Lewis Allen. Paramount.

Even the most modern 'teen ager will have a wonderful time looking at Mother as she was in her youth, and we doubt that she will find her "quaint." With gentle humor this delightful picture presents two charming girls of Mother's generation, eager and naive, off for a European vacation with a natural desire for independence and a hope of appearing utterly sophisticated. Both girls are superbly portrayed; the relationship of Cornelia's parents to their unpredictable charges is healthy and normal, and the situations which arise are deliciously hilarious. It is a film which is unique in design and wholly delightful for all ages.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very good

Children, 8 to 12 Good

PSYCHIATRY IN ACTION ◇ ◇

Screen play by Stephen Ackroyd. Photography by Cyril Bristow. Direction by Michael Harkinson. Produced by Spectator Films for the British Ministry of Information.

Lacking in technical excellence of American films, this nevertheless should be seen because it takes up an important subject of the day: the treatment of the many types of neurotic cases caused by the war. It is a purely objective discussion of the way brilliant physicians and psychiatrists in England are attacking this problem. It takes up in

details the arrival of patients at one of the big hospitals, Mill Hill, the mental and physical tests, the various medical and psychological methods used, the progress made. It is not a film for enjoyment, but it offers the sort of education we, the public, must have if we are to understand the returned soldiers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 If sufficiently interested — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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SECRET COMMAND ◇ ◇

Pat O'Brien, Carole Landis, Chester Morris, Ruth Warrick, Barton MacLane, Tom Tully, Wallace Ford, Howard Freeman, Erik Rolf, Nat McHugh, Frank Sully. Screen play by Roy Chanslor from Saturday Evening Post story, "The Saboteurs." Direction by Eddie Sullivan. Columbia Pictures.

"Saboteurs," when it ran as a serial in the Saturday Evening Post, was a more complicated mystery than the screen adaptation. The reader was held in suspense for a longer time concerning the real significance of the character of *Sam*. In the film version suspense depends entirely upon exciting episodes of sabotage and threats of death or discovery. However, the action, set in a modern ship building plant speeding up war deliveries, is rugged and thrilling, the acting is good, and the dialogue natural. It is above average melodrama of its type.

though there is a lack of adult supervision in the film which does not conform with actual facts, the actors are wholesome, lively youngsters, singing, dancing, romancing during free hours and performing useful tasks in the daytime. Jane Powell is an attractive girl with a lovely voice.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** No objection

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THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL ◇ ◇

Gary Cooper, Laraine Day, Signe Hasso, Dennis O'Keefe, Carol Thirston, Carl Esmond, Paul Kelly, Elliott Reid, Stanley Ridges, Renny McEvoy, Oliver Thorndike, Philip Ahn, Barbara Britton. Based on the story related by Dr. Wassell and fifteen wounded soldiers and on the story by James Hilton. Photography by Victor Milner and William Snyder. Musical score by Victor Young. Producer-director: Cecil B. De Mille. Paramount.

In the heartbreaking retreat through Java, when Allied forces were so pitifully inadequate that they could only fight a delaying action, Dr. Wassell, a plain country doctor from Arkansas, was put in charge of a group of wounded men from the ship Marblehead. Those who were not walking cases were rated expendable by the Army, but with grim, dogged bravery and endurance the doctor brought them out alive. Gary Cooper is exceptionally good as Dr. Wassell because

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste — **Children, 8 to 12** Too violent for many

SENSATIONS OF 1945 ◇ ◇

Eleanor Powell, Dennis O'Keefe, C. Aubrey Smith, Mimi Forsythe, Lyle Talbot, Eugene Pallette, Hubert Castle, W. C. Fields, Sophie Tucker, Dorothy Donegan, Cab Calloway and his Band, etc. Screen play by Dorothy Bennett from an original story by Frederick Jackson. Direction by Andrew Stone. Produced by Andrew Stone. United Artists.

A certain type of audience in search of sensation, boogie woogie, and constant acrobatic movement may find this picture to its taste, but others will find it enervating. It is crowded with extravagant variety acts, some outstanding in their class, as the circus performances; some grotesque, as that of Dorothy Donegan at the piano. The dance sequences fall short of distinction, and the emphasis throughout seems to be more on specialties and jazz than is usual. While the acts are an integral part of the story, the plot holds little interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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SEVEN DAYS ASHORE ◇ ◇

Wally Brown, Alan Carney, Marcy McGuire, Dooley Wilson, Gordon Oliver, Virginia Mayo, Amelita Ward, Elaine Shepard, Marjorie Gateson, Alan Dinehart. Screen play by Edward Verdier, Irving Phillips and Lawrence Kimble based on an original story by Jacques Deval. Producer-director: John H. Auer. R.K.O.

The old burlesque comedy slogan, "A sailor has a girl in every port," is the basis of a particularly insipid and distasteful plot. When a trio from the Merchant Marine lands in San Francisco, one of their number, *Dan*, sends letters to two chorines and a girl of whom his family approves, professing mad love for each of them. To teach him a lesson the "nice girl" has the two show girls sue him for breach of promise, and seven hectic days ensue for *Dan* until he is rescued by his buddies. The three men are unattractive, dispensing dialogue from ancient joke books, character roles are stereotyped, and the musical specialty numbers will appeal only to uncritical jive audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No. Waste of time — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD ◇ ◇

Jane Powell, Edward Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, W. C. Fields, Bonita Granville, Peggy O'Neil, Jackie Moran, Bill Christy, Reginald Denny, Regis Toomey, Rose Hobart, Sammy Kaye. Directed by S. Sylvan Simon. Produced by Charles R. Rogers. United Artists.

While this picture is not of stellar proportions, it is a nice program musical with rather a novel theme about a teen age girl who joins a group of young people engaged in fruit-picking. They live in youth hostels, which the average American may not realize

exist in the U. S. as well as in Europe. Al- of his perfect naturalness, his modesty, and his down-to-earth Americanism. The personal romance of the doctor lessens the tension of the film and makes one think of him more as an individual than as a symbol. There are many good performances by the members of the large cast. No other picture has revealed the psychology of the wounded so well as this one. Many spectacular scenes in Technicolor against the backgrounds of the Orient are handled in the De Mille style with masses of people in the Chinese city streets, on the wharves of Java, and on the ship which removes the last of the refugees. It is one of the best of the war films.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine picture with historical significance

Children, 8 to 12 Too grim

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SUMMER STORM ◇ ◇

George Sanders, Linda Darnell. Anna Lee, Edward Everett Horton, Hugo Haas, Lori Lakner, Sig Ruman. Screen play by Rowland Leigh from novel by Anton Chekov, adapted by Marshall O'Hara. Direction by Eugene Schufftan and William McGarry, Angelus Pictures. United Artists.

This is an exceptionally interesting interpretation of the Russian social structure before the Revolution, as told in a story of illicit passion resulting in tragedy. It is exceedingly well produced, tactfully presented, and very well acted, with especially striking performances by several supporting players. Its power depends upon its honesty which resorts to no sentimentality in emotional appeal through either plot or characters. The musical score is remarkably beautiful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12 Unsuitable

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TAKE IT BIG ◇ ◇

Jack Haley, Harriet Hilliard, Mary Beth Hughes, Richard Lane, Arline Judge, Fritz Feld, Lucile Gleason, Fuzzy Knight, Frank Forest, George Meeker. Original screen play by Howard J. Green. Direction by Frank McDonald. Paramount.

The popular demand for light comedy musicals brings some to the screen which are a sheer waste of time. This film falls into that class with its silly and somewhat vulgar specialty acts interspersed with drinking scenes. One sequence with a fabricated horse is really amusing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mediocre

Children, 8 to 12 No

❖

THIS IS THE LIFE ◇ ◇

Donald O'Connor, Susanna Foster, Peggy Ryan, Patric Knowles, Louise Allbritten, Dorothy Peterson, Jonathan Hale. Direction by Felix A. Feist. Universal.

A pleasantly youthful atmosphere pervades this picture about a young girl who thinks she is in love with a handsome older man until a boy of her own age brings her to her senses. Susanna Foster has a charming voice, and her songs are well chosen, but she is too large a girl and too mature looking to be paired with Donald O'Connor, especially when Peggy Ryan, well-suited to him, is in the same play. The latter forsakes her incessant jitterbugging for some really talented comedy dance numbers. Donald is an original youngster, whose pursuit of an elusive cherry at the bottom of a lemonade glass is one of the funniest bits of pantomime on record. The older members of the cast are competent. The picture seems a little uneven, especially in the earlier scenes, but on the whole it is enjoyable light entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Theme of doubtful interest

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THREE MEN IN WHITE ◇ ◇

Lionel Barrymore, Van Johnson, Marilyn Maxwell, Keye Luke, Ava Gardner, Alma Kruger, Rags Ragland, Nell Craig, Walter Kingsford, George H. Reed, Celia Travers. Direction by Willis Goldbeck. M.G.M.

One of the poorer members of the *Dr. Gillespie* series shows the doctor becoming senile, bellowing at patients and nurses and quarreling with the staff during the moments he is not engrossed in choosing between a Chinese interne and a cocky American boy for his assistant. The romance between young *Dr. Adams* and a social worker flaunts all precepts of good taste and invites censorship when the girl uses extreme efforts to lure him to the altar. Two cases of moderate interest are used as examples of medical problems, and the inadequate plot is padded by rather trashy dialogue.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor entertainment

Children, 8 to 12 No

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